HOUSE of the SUN

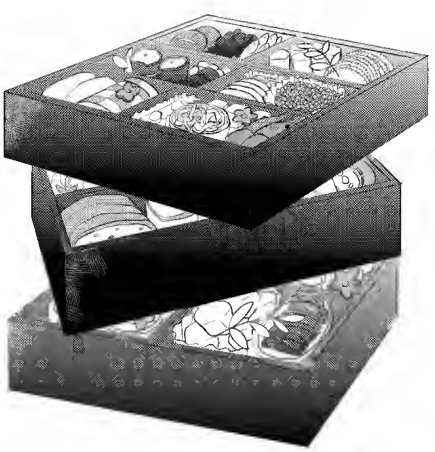
10

Taamo

HOUSE of the SUN

10

by Taamo



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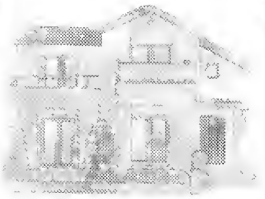
CHARACTER

Roommates



Friends

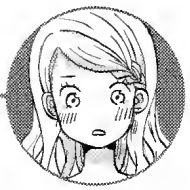
Mao Motomiya
Second-year high school student. Without a place to call home, Mao moves into Hiro's house. Mao is secretly writing an online autobiography under the pen name Kukai.

Brothers

Hiro Nakamura
Businessman with housewife tendencies. Mao's childhood friend. He's been working to protect their home ever since his parents died in his third year of high school. He's watching over the house, hoping to once again live with his sister and brother.

Class-mates

Co-workers



Chi-chan (Chihiro)
Mao's friend. She likes Oda-kun and confessed to him, but was turned down. Her second attack on him was successful. ♡

Oda-kun
Mao's classmate since first year. Had a thing for Mao, but was rejected and is heartbroken. He's started dating Chihiro.

Sugimoto-san
Hiro's coworker. She's a fan of Mao's novel. Her nickname is "Radical." She confessed her feelings to Hiro, but her heart was broken.

Daiki Nakamura
Hiro's little brother. In his second year of high school. He moved in with an uncle after their parents died, but he has decided to return to the Nakamura house. He's in the same class as Mao.

STORY

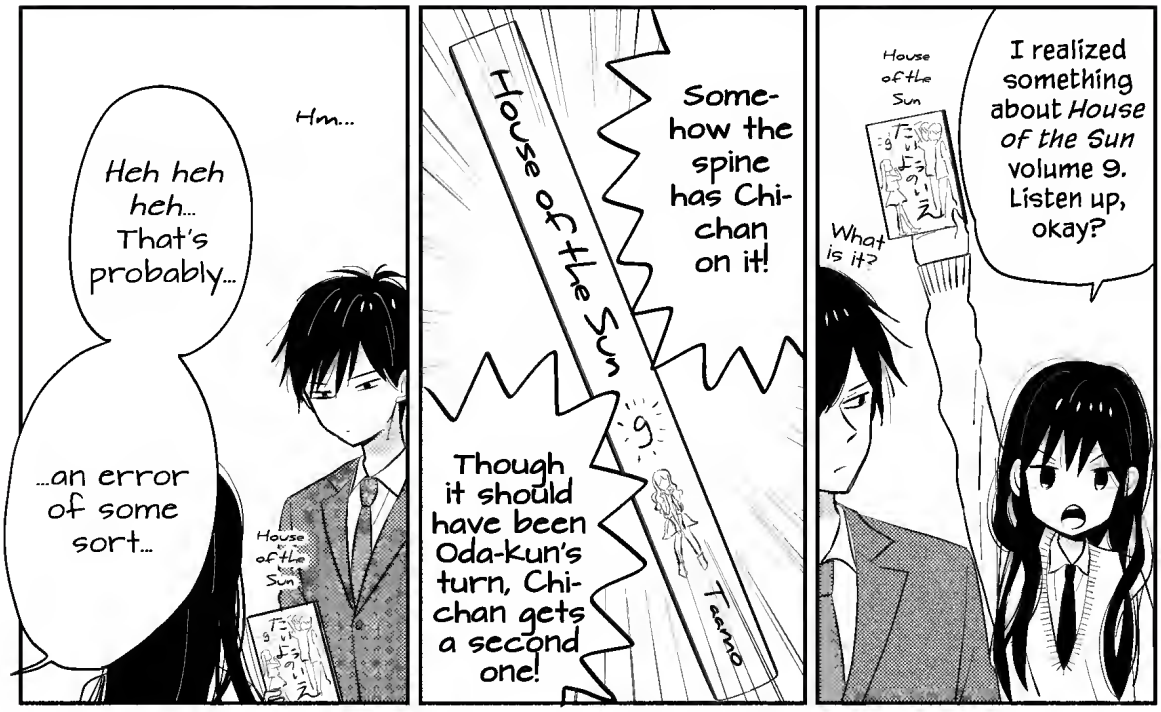
After her father gets remarried, Mao feels like she no longer has a home and, aiming for independence, she is now staying with her childhood friend Hiro.

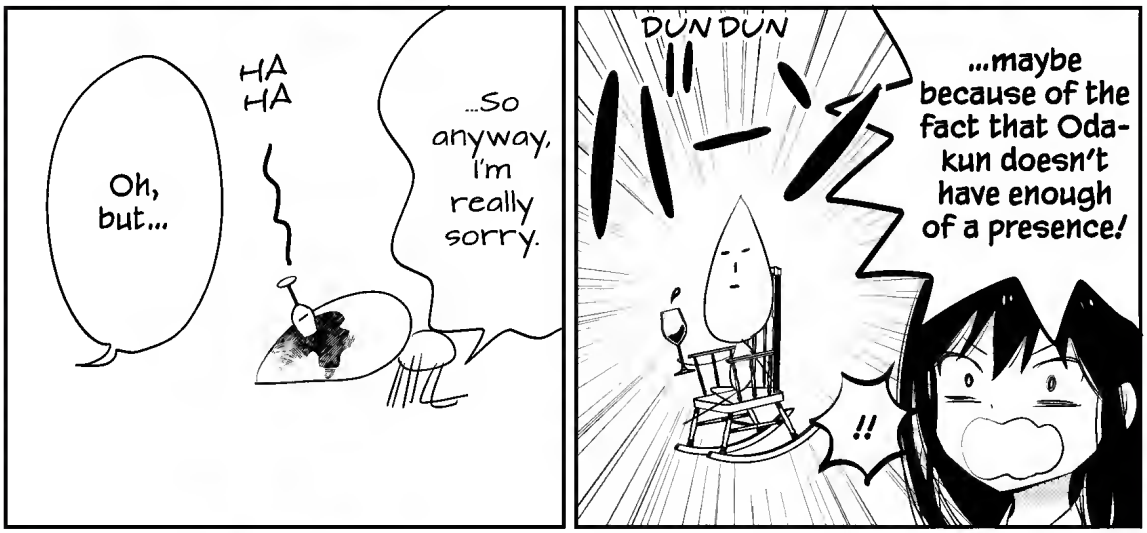
Hiro's younger brother Daiki recently moved in, and the three of them are all living together. Hiro is kind and takes good care of Mao, and she's fallen for him. And then, one day, Hiro suddenly kisses her!

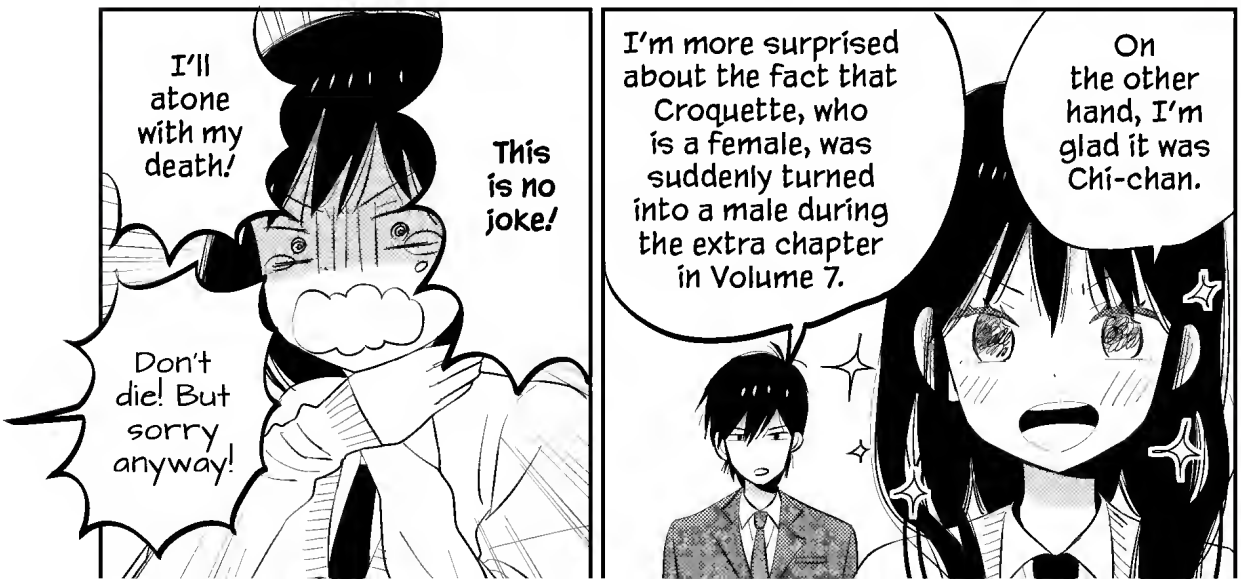
But he refuses to admit how he feels about her, and just as Mao is becoming confused about things, Daiki is the one who confesses his love for her.

Daiki tells her he's liked her ever since they were children and that all he wants her to do is " think about giving me a chance," and he won't budge on it...?!

HOUSE OF THE SUN REVIEW MEETING

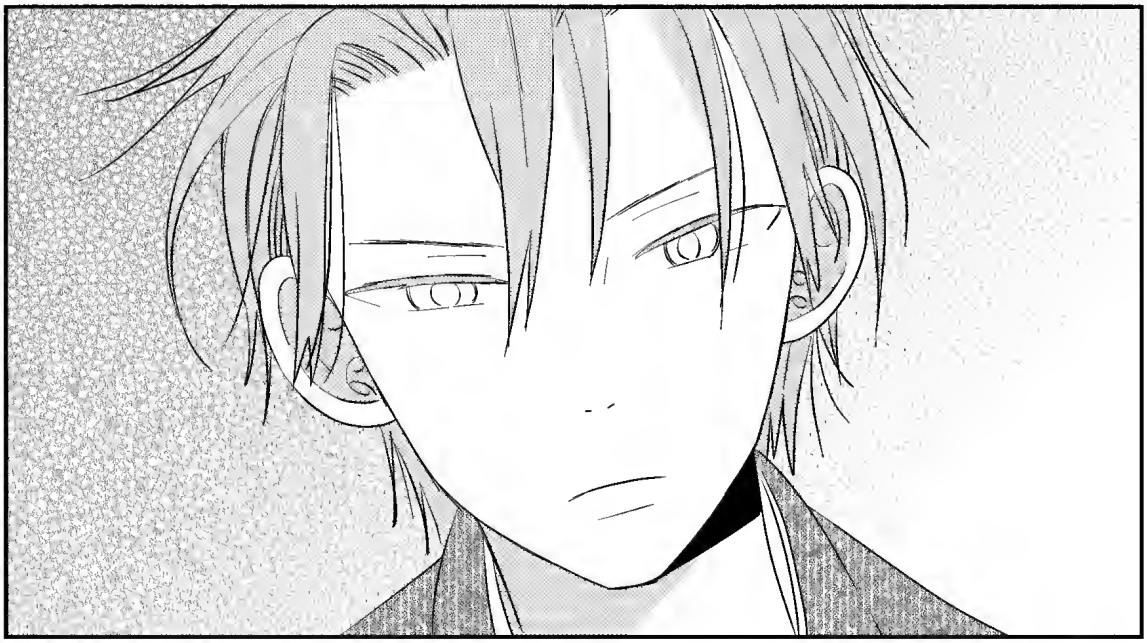






I said it so that you'd think about giving me a chance.

I didn't tell you that so I could give up right from the beginning.



Motomiya-san, Nakamura-san.
Sorry, but could you clean up in here now?

...Daiki.
U-understood!
Okay.
Um...
...
Ow!
PLAP
Let's clean up.
We're done with that.
What's with that concerned face?

They're not home yet?
GRR
GRR
GRR

Well... I'm doing some weird things, too...

They're late...! They're too late!
I wonder if Daiki said something weird to Mao.

I'm home.

I'm thinking too much. Too much.

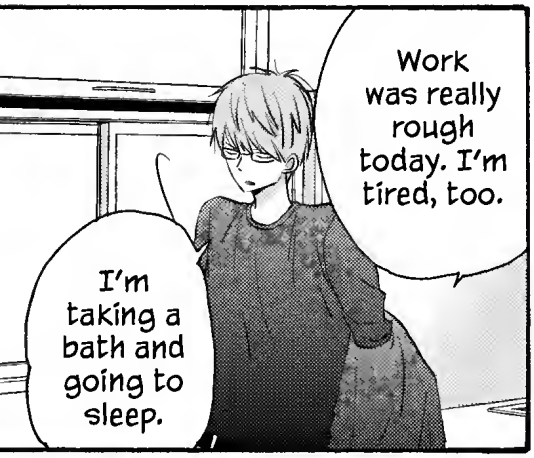
I'm home.
You're here?
Hey, welcome back.
Were we? We came right home as soon as work was done.
Aren't you running a little late?
Um...
Look, it's nothing.
Obviously I feel unsafe with you there now!
What's gotten into you all of a sudden?
Didn't you say you felt safe with Mao coming home late as long as I was there, too?

I'm going to bed.
I'll take a bath tomorrow.
Huh? Are you not feeling well?
I don't really have a reason. I'm just tired.
That's reason enough.
Ah.

Also...
...since tomorrow's the weekend, I'm thinking I might go back home.

I'll go straight there from school! Good night!
I just want to get the travel plans set up!
Hm?

Good night.


Work was really rough today. I'm tired, too.
I'm taking a bath and going to sleep.

...

That was weird, right?!
Wait, doesn't this mean something definitely happened?!

Wh-whaaa?
Daiki-kun said that to you?!
I'm surprised?!
PULL
PULL
PULL
PULL
That was a weird reaction. Chi-chan, did you know?
...
STAARE
No way! I didn't have any idea!
How long?
A long time.
That was a pretty quick confession.

You knew about it already, Chi-chan.
Do you think I've been cruel to Daiki?
Y-yeah. I feel bad about it.
I didn't do anything wrong!
Actually, I think you took way too long to figure it out!!
BWEHHHH
But, I mean, jeez, Daiki-kun is just so easy to understand!
Have I been an awful person?
You like Hiro-san, Mao. There's nothing you could do.

...exactly how much I'd hurt Daiki.

...I felt like Chi-chan had told me...

With just those few words...

Still... I know I have to be sure to tell Daiki the truth.
But still...
Even if it's just going to hurt him more...
...I have to tell him.

Even if we can't cry together anymore.
Even if we can't smile together anymore.
Why do people...
...with each other?
...fall in love...
What?

Yeah.
I already knew that.
B-but I really do like Hiro...
I-
I'm glad you feel that way about me, Daiki...
Um...
You have to think about it. Between Hiro and me, which is superior goods?
And I'm telling you, it's too early to come to a conclusion.
N... ngh.

Though I always compare myself to other people, all it does is make me sad.
I don't really want to compare people to each other.
Yeah.
Goods ?!
...
...
I, um... I'm going to my home today.
Let's go home.
I get it. I won't say anything more.

I-I'm not running away!
You're running away.
It's because I've got you stressed out, isn't it?
Oh, that's right.
You're running over there.
You're wrong! Bye!
...
Daiki was right.
Running from Daiki...
I'm running home.
...and from Hiro, too.

Even though I ran away from this house in the first place.
Oh, Mao-chan!
Welcome home.
I'm just coming back from shopping.
You came straight from school?
This must be important.
I bought some really tasty-looking persimmons. Let's eat them together.
本宮

Should we go in?

Ah.
Mom, big sis! Welcome home!
We're home.

Did you?
It is really cute, though, so you should be sure to show it off.
...
Does your tummy hurt, big sis?
You look bad.

But I told him no.
Um, you know what Ah-kun did?
He asked me for the pencil case you gave me!
The one that's not cute.

SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
Are the people at your other house being mean?
They're not being mean to me at all.
They're being very kind to me.
They're always always spoiling me, both of them.
I'm so stupid.
Why did I run here, anyway?

Oh, welcome home, Dad!
I'm home.
Wel-come home.

I wanted to make some plans for the trip.
Yay, our trip!
Oh right, you're here.

...I'm sorry.
You're always like that when you come home.
Huh. You look pretty down, though.
Dad!
I think something happened to Mao at the Nakamura house.
She needs us to be here for her.
Huh?

Mao chose the Nakamura house, but she's coming here for comfort?
Don't make me laugh.
ニャク
CHMP

You have to think about it. Between Hiro and me, which is superior goods?
Am I Pavlov's dog now?
I always want to see Hiro when I come back to this room.
Also I wanna see Croquette.
ぼふっ
BOMF

Oh, you have all your things. Going home already?
You know you can stay as long as you like.
Morning.
PSHHH
Good morning.
I decided it's not a good idea to run home like this.
...
Home is amazing.
I feel like just by being here I've gotten my mind in order a little.

Though I guess it's his problem to solve, now.
I hope this place solidifies itself as a place like that for you, Mao-chan.
Mao-chan...
...but you can come home whenever you want, okay?
I don't know what happened to you...
Well, I'll see you when you get home.
...
Okay.

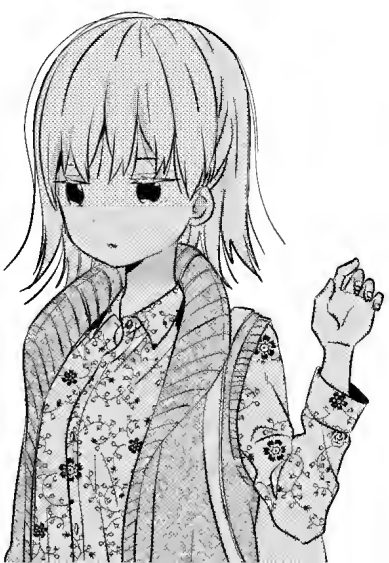
I guess I'm still a little shy.
ぎゅむ HUG
はっ PWF
She really smelled like a mom.
Moms are...
...great.
I feel like I can do my best now.
Everything else is up to the gods.

Hina-chan?
This is secret from Hiro and Dai-chan.
My aunt told me I should come look at high schools here.
Huh?
That's really great, though.

I was just about to head back to Sendai.
But I'm glad I bumped into you, even by accident.
P-please come back to Hiro's with me!
Something happened that's making it hard for me to go home alone.
I'll feel better if you come along, Hina-chan!
Did Dai-chan do something?

...
...
NOD
He did!
So come with me!
Really, I just think Hina-chan in particular needs to go home to that house.
SHAKE
SHAKE
SHAKE
Okay!
Okay!

Hurry! I'll pull this hand along...
...to the person who most wants to see you in the world.



Sorry.

You're bad at lying, Mao-chan.
Even if I weren't here...
...you could go home just fine.
See you.
Thanks.

Mao! You're home early.
I made some cream puffs. You want one?
Too sweet. No, thank you.
I'm home.
KREE
Oh, did you end up making any decisions about the trip?
Sendai.
We should go to Sendai.
Ma-kun is there, too.

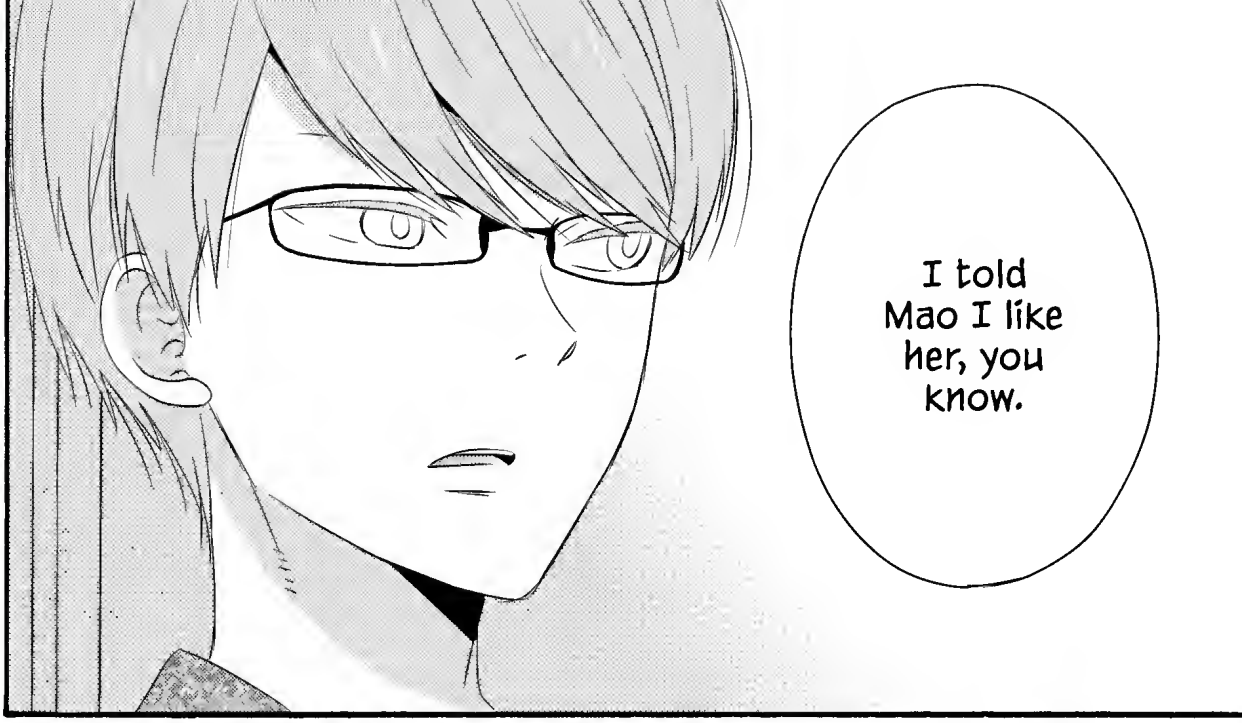
What about Kyoto?
I just went to Sendai, though.
And will your old man really be okay with that, Mao?

But I see...
If we go to Sendai, we might all get to see Hina-chan.

But mostly, Hina-chan is there.

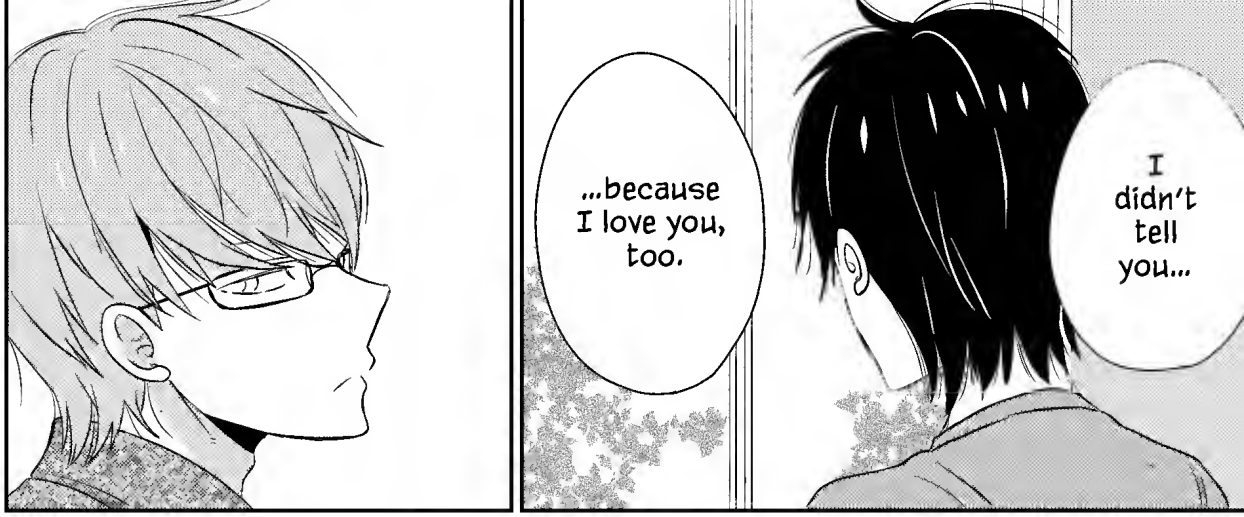
Oh, really?
Y-yeah! It's fine!
You won't have a problem going a bunch of times, Hiro!
I'm going to go look it up in my room for a bit.

Hina-chan...
Daiki ...
Hiro ...
Mom...
Yui-chan ...
Dad ...
There's so much to think about.
But it'll only be a bit longer.
I'm gonna meet him head-on.
The same way that Hiro did for me.
I have to think...
...very hard about Daiki.


I told Mao I like her, you know.

Looks like...
...she's taking it seriously.

Look.
Don't you lay a hand on Mao.
That how you really feel?
...
You still can't say it?
I know exactly how Mao feels. What I want to know is how you feel, Hiro.
I said that because I love Mao.


I didn't tell you...
...because I love you, too.

And I want to protect our home.

Hmmmph.
...

I said that because I love Mao.

And I want to protect our home.

I didn't tell you because I love you, too.

story 38
Seal

JINGLE BELLS
ジングルベール
JINGLE BELLS
ジングルベール
X'mas セール

*X-MAS SALE

Waaah! Look, there's a Christmas Tree!
Oh, no! Christmas is so soon! The year is ending.
Sure is. You gonna go somewhere with Oda-kun?
Oooh! Right! This year I can go with Oda-kun!!
With my boyfriend! My boyfriend!

What're we gonna do? Should we go somewhere?
Should we go star-gazing?
Should we eat delicious food?!
Should we make out?!
Hi
GNWAAAAH
Bi
Mao! Why are you so calm?!
You usually scream and shout with me!
High school girls shouldn't say stuff like "gnawaaah."
Don't you want to make out with Hiro-san?
Hmm.
SHAKE SHAKE SHAKE
Well, I'm going home for Christmas.
But my dad really hates Christmas, so I'm not sure.
Yeah.
I wanted to spend it with my dad and everybody.
Oh, I see.
...

Even when I was a kid, I never really looked forward to Christmas much.
Sorry, Chi-chan...
...I was always alone.
So even though everyone else was festive...
I couldn't go to Hiro's house for Christmas...
...
JINGLE BELLS
JINGLE BELLS

This reminds me of...
...my childhood.
SOB
SOB
SOB
SOB
Yes...
So, we'll be taking Hina-chan!
Hina, our uncle and aunty are going to worry, so try to stop crying until later, okay?
...
Wah...
Ah...
SOB
SOB

Whichever is fine with me.

I was so focused on myself back then.

It was all I could do just to stay upright.

So of course Hiro's requests for us to come back home didn't get through.

Eventually, Hiro stopped saying anything about it.

We were definitely the ones who let his enthusiasm wither.

I don't know what Hina was thinking, though.
But there's one thing I have verified.

Hiro was always thinking of Hina and me...

...but how could we have done that for him?

...
Wh-Me?
Yes, sir. ♡
Are you looking for a Christmas present?
キラキラ
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
...
I'm fine.
Yes, sir! Please come back soon.
Don't you think your girlfriend would love it?
This type has been very popular this year.
If I bought something like that for Mao, she'd bolt.
That was close
When did I end up here?

...
*Sale on Supplies for Living on your Own
1人暮らし応援フェア
...
NINTENDO 3DS
¥14300
*Approximately $130

...it would reflect poorly on me.
...and left the house because a girl dumped me...
If I ignored what Hiro wants...

I should go to work.
...
Hiro would probably always...
...see me as just a total jerk.

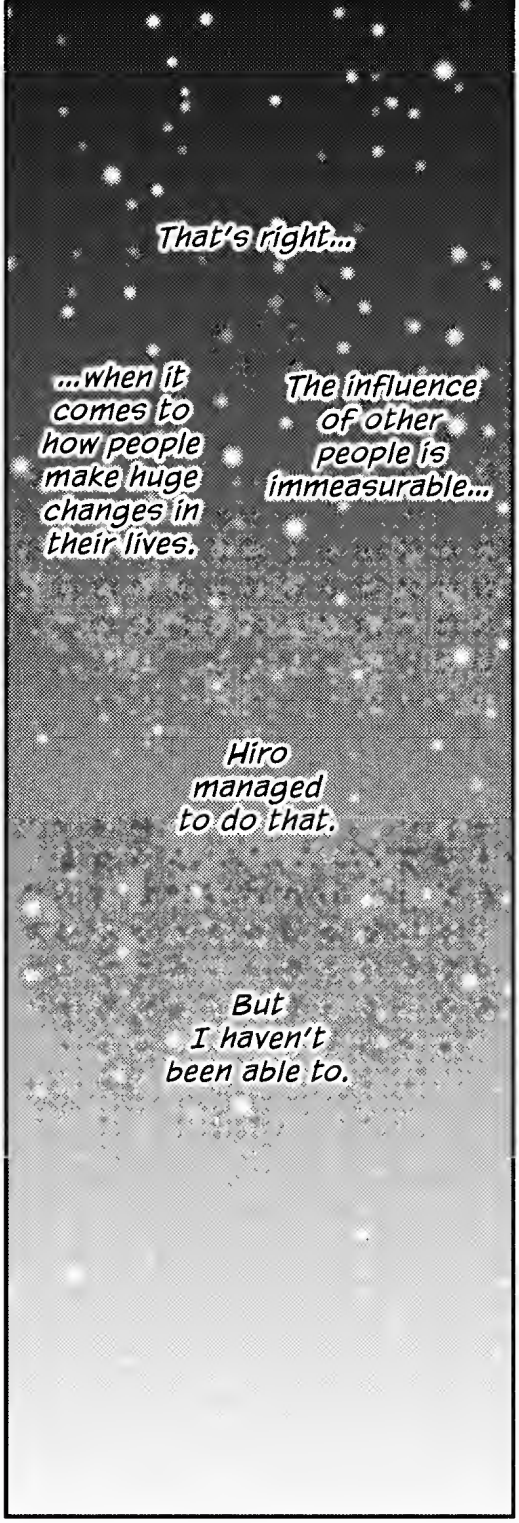
Aah! Nakamura-kun, you're here!
*Civil War
戦国
...
What is it?
Hey, hey, I have a favor to ask.
One of the group canceled, and I promise I won't tell Motomiya-san, so please!
Can you be a ringer at this group date I'm doing?

I was so sure you'd reply with, "There's no point in going," and refuse.
I'll let them know!
What?! Really?! Hooray!
Sure, I'll go.
That impression wasn't at all like me, though.
It was spot-on.
I thought about saying that.
You're a lifesaver. It'll be great to have a tall high school guy...
ギラ
SPARKLE
ギラ
SPARKLE
ギラ
SPARKLE
ギラ
SPARKLE
Nice to meet-chuuu~ ♡

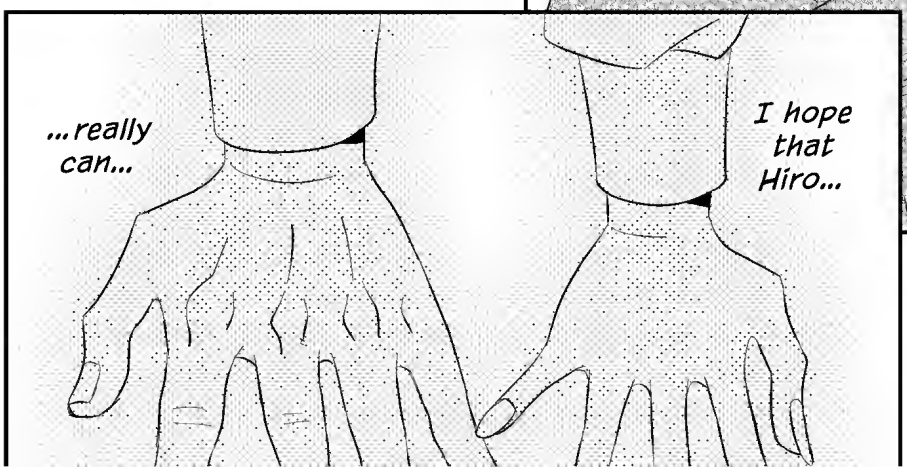
Okay, let's sit boy-girl-boy-girl!
Boy-girl?!
Okay, let's introduce ourselves, going clockwise.
What-ever?!
Is this your first time at a mixer?
Yeah.
Oh... Well, you can do whatever, then.
I'm Yuuna.
I'm 19, and I'm in college.
What's going on here?!
Oh, thats right, Nakamura-kun, you still have one of those old fossils... A non-smart phone. I can still text you, right?
I never asked you to!
Let's trade Line addresses.
Huh?!

Why do I have to exchange personal information with people I've never met before?
I wanna go home.
Oh! That's right!
Sorry, you actually have a girlfriend, right, Nakamura-kun.
No, I don't!
TEE HEE
I don't have a girlfriend.
I got dumped.
It's too annoying to explain.
I'm wrong?
But...

Whaaaaat?!
Motomiya-san dumped you? When?
Recently.
CLATTER
Really…
It seemed like it was going so well.
PLP
I think that meeting a new love gives you infinite possibilities, don't you?
It'll be okay.
Poor sweet baby.

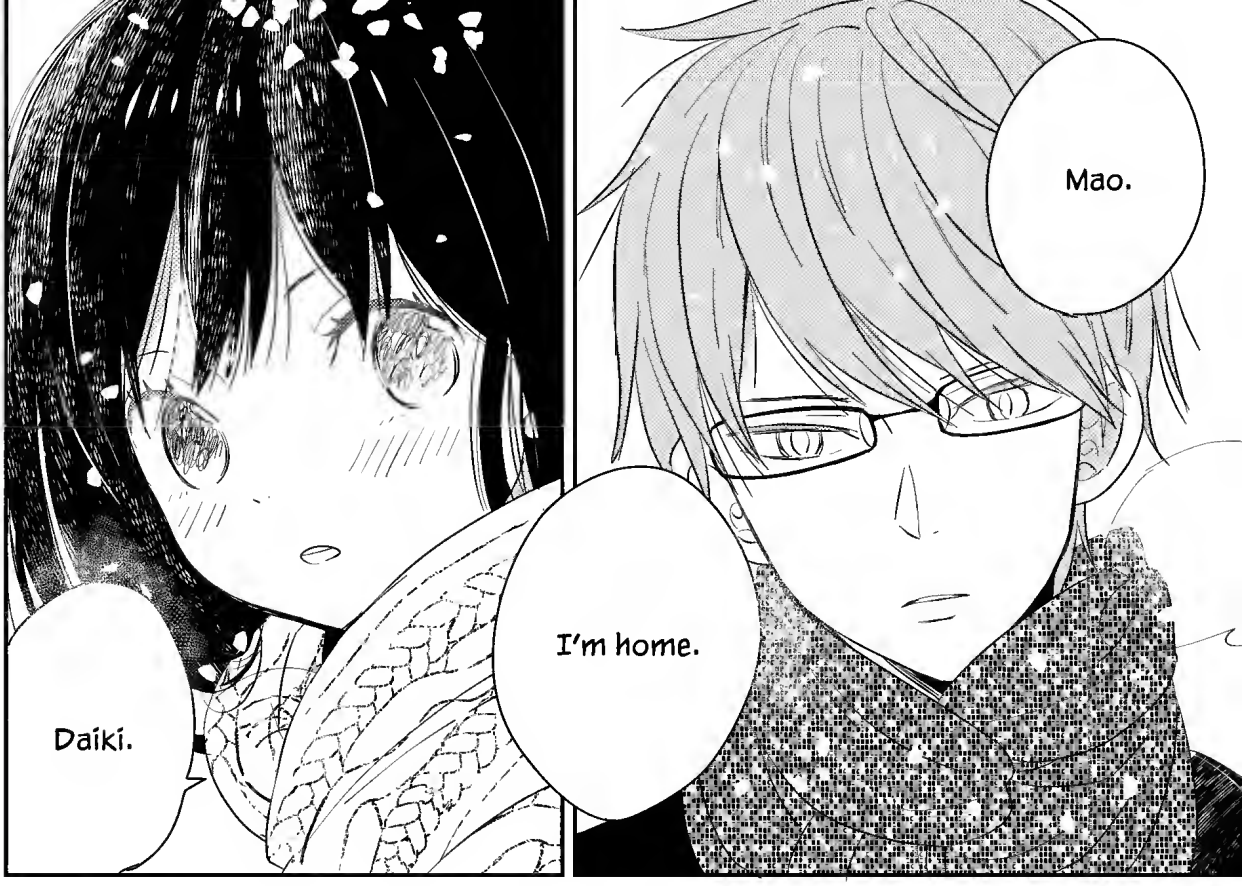


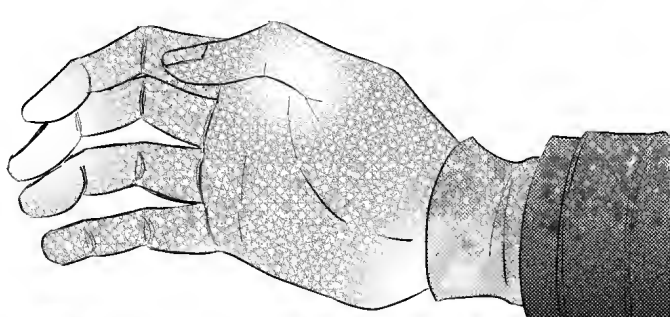
I think so, too.



...make Mao happy, in the end.
I'm sorry.
I have to go home.
Hm? What's wrong?
My brother is coming home late tonight, and I have to make sure to walk and feed the dog.
Oh... is that true?
I'll make it up to you. Sorry.

I hope the two of them can be happy together...
...so why did I make up some excuse to leave?
Nothing changed because I met Mao.
So why do I still love her?


Daiki.
I'm home.
Mao.



Oh, sorry! Thanks.
You've got snow on you.

Dai-
HUG
ギュッ
Shut up.
...to Hiro's house.
I don't want to send you back...

Even though I didn't want to, I compared you and Hiro.
Every single day.
I've thought really hard about you, Daiki.

Sometimes you're mean to me...
...but you've been there for me so many times.
And as goods, I guess I can say...
...you really are superior.

So much so that I think...
...I could be fine with never having a merry Christmas if I couldn't have it with him.
But I love Hiro.
I say this knowing that maybe after this we couldn't really be friends or family anymore...
...so please...

I get it.
Oh, yeah?
Huh...?
You do, too, Daiki.
I knew it already.
I mean... yeah...
I knew that Hiro meant that much to you already.

But I love Hiro.
Plus, I'm hungry. Let's go home.
Let's stop talking about this.
This is too depressing.
Wh-why?
Want to hold hands?

Let's go back to Hiro.
I'm sorry I made you worry.
I really didn't want to make you look at me that way.

I wanted you to smile, Mao.

I came home because I wanted to see you.

Maybe if I'd come home just a little sooner, things might have been different.

But honestly, there are so many things I want to talk to you about...

...and feel this way.

...I'll be able to touch Mao...

This is the last time...

Farewell...

...shrimpy little Mao.

FWIP
FWIP
Thanks for your poop report.
Croquette pooped a lot!
I'm home!
Welcome home.
PLSH
PLSH
PLSH
Hiro.
My bad?
How come Daiki's with you?
It's not bad. Dinner's ready.
PLSH
PLSH
PLSH
PLSH
THUD
Ow!
What is it?

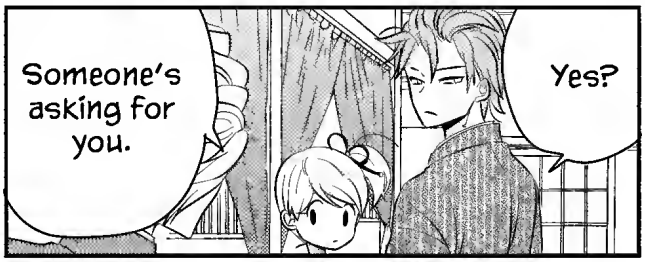
It's an early present.
Merry Christmas.
What the heck?! Ow!
Quit throwing things.
Thanks, Daiki.
Ooh, a 3DS?
Daiki! Is there one for me?!
None for me...!
Nope.
It's way too early for Christ-mas.
I'm gonna destroy you, though.
Next year and the year after that, too.
Let's play together.

What's with the declaration of war?
And that far in the future, too...?
Who knows? Taking a bath.
Like I'm gonna let that jerk Daiki beat me...
Mao, teach me how!
What's wrong?
It's nothing.
I'm going back to my room.
Thank you...
...Daiki.

Nakamura-kun! Thanks for your help. And sorry.

...
For me?

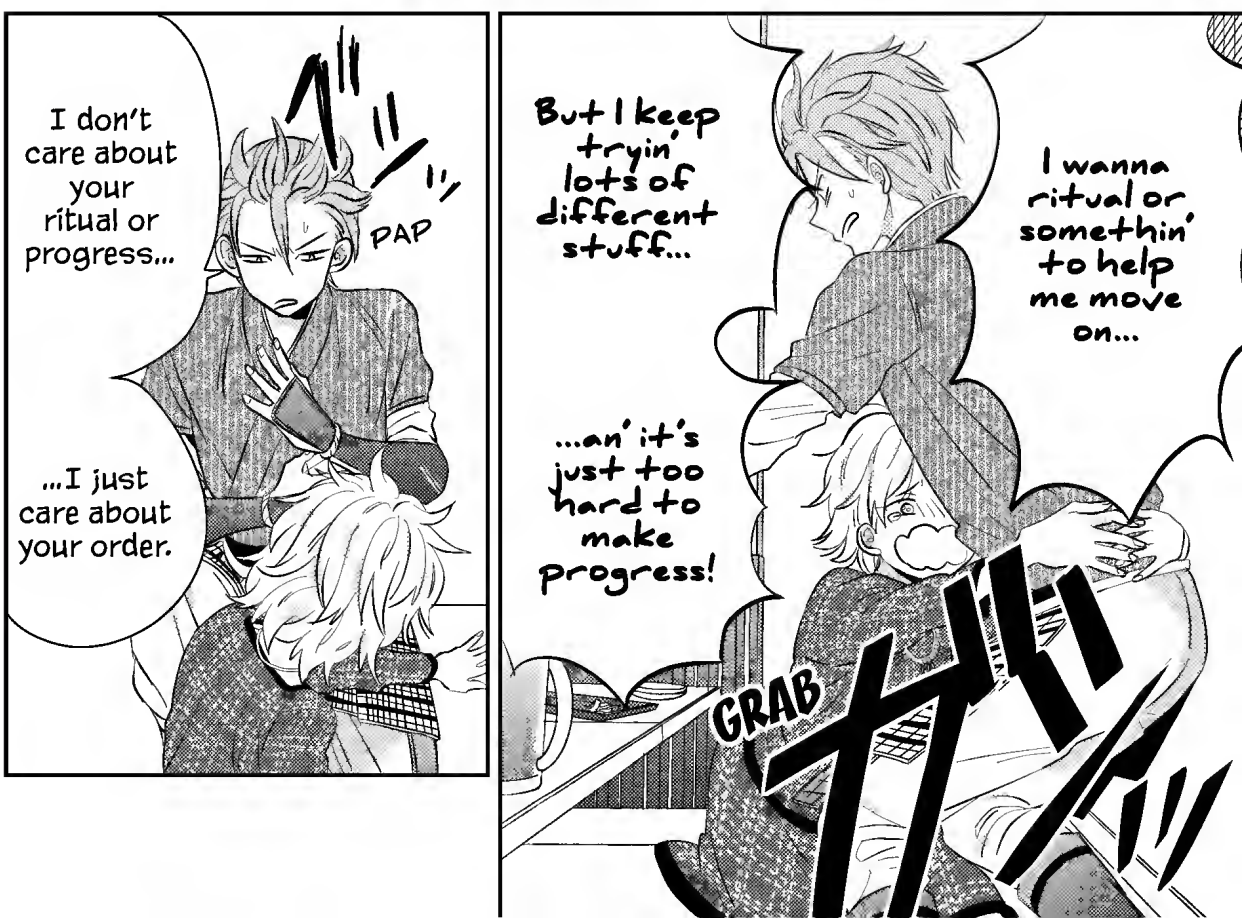
Actually, I think I'm good.
It's fine! I'll invite you again!
No, I'm the one who should be sorry.
Naka-mura...


Someone's asking for you.
Yes?

WAVE
WAVE
WAVE
Wello, li'l brother!!
Aaaah! He's here!

Don't be an ass!
Gah? What's that for?!
Gah.
BWA HA HA
Well, thanks...
... comin' to this place 'n drinkin' alone.
Since I know you, I feel better...
Tell Mao-san...
What's your order?
I got something of hers that I need to return...
...but I jus' can't make the decision.

I tried buyin' a heartbreak diary...
...but I just can't move on.
Ugh, what a pain...
It's not a thing I c'n hand over...
If you want, I can give it to her.
S-so I gotta talk to Nakamura-san, and...
SNIFF


I don't care about your ritual or progress...
...I just care about your order.
PAP
But I keep tryin' lots of different stuff...
...an' it's just too hard to make progress!
I wanna ritual or somethin' to help me move on...
GRAB

You've never been turned down!
Y-yer so cold.
Much colder than Nakamura-san...
Please stop comparing us.
Your order?
I've been turned down.
3D men should all just disappear!
So you could never understand the feelings of this garbage woman in front of you!
WAAAAAAAH

Love can also be watching over someone.
SNFF
Your order?
The Date fried fish, please.

story 39

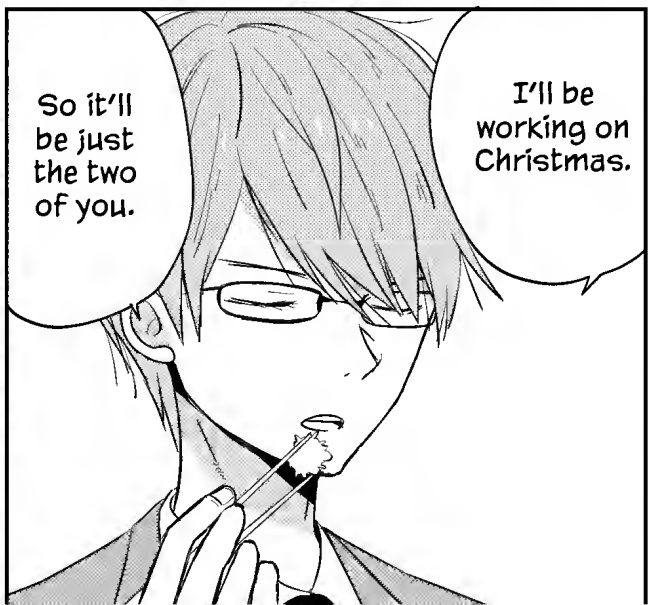
Assorted Christmasses

It's almost Christmas.

I have to be sure to buy a present for Hina.
Maybe by next year, Hina will be here, too. This might be the first and last Christmas with just the three of us.

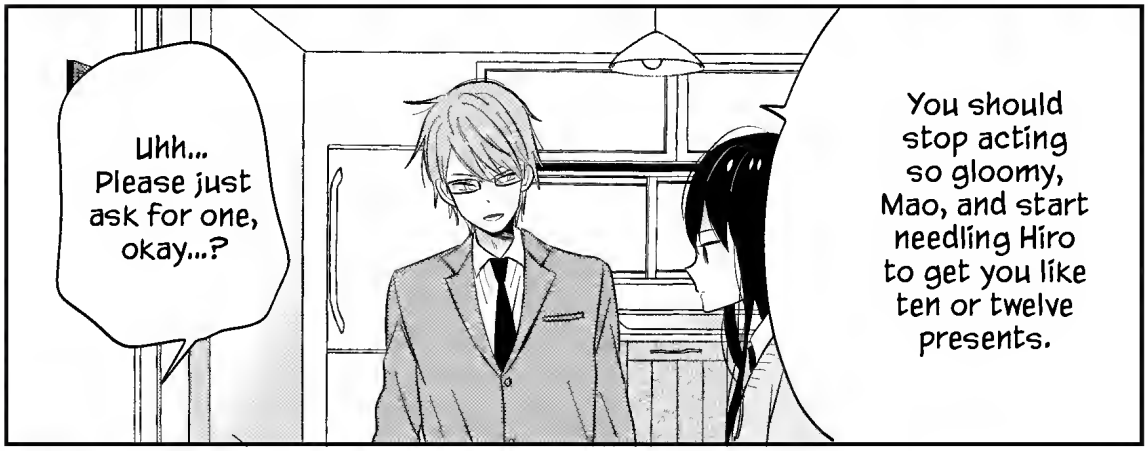
PLSH
コポコポ
PLSH
コポコポ
PLSH
Sure is.

Huh...?


So it'll be just the two of you.
I'll be working on Christmas.

I guess I've just had a little change of heart recently.

You've been acting weird lately.
What's up with you, Daiki?


Uhh... Please just ask for one, okay...?
You should stop acting so gloomy, Mao, and start needling Hiro to get you like ten or twelve presents.

...

Daiki...?
Well, fine, how about you get me a smartphone, okay, Hiro?
That's a surprisingly honest request.
Well, that was just a joke.
But I'm actually planning to go home for Christmas.

Oh, really?
Well, that's a good idea.
But I guess that means I'm alone.
Guess you'll be having a blue Christmas, huh?
Asshole Smirk
That face is pissing me off!

Later, you two. It's piling up, so don't fall down.
Yep, do your best at work.
たたたっ
TMP
TMP
TMP
Daiki.

I didn't do it for you, Hiro.
I did it for Mao.

You...

Shove off, you jerk.
Like, whatever.

We're gonna be late.
Snow-ball fight.
What was that about?

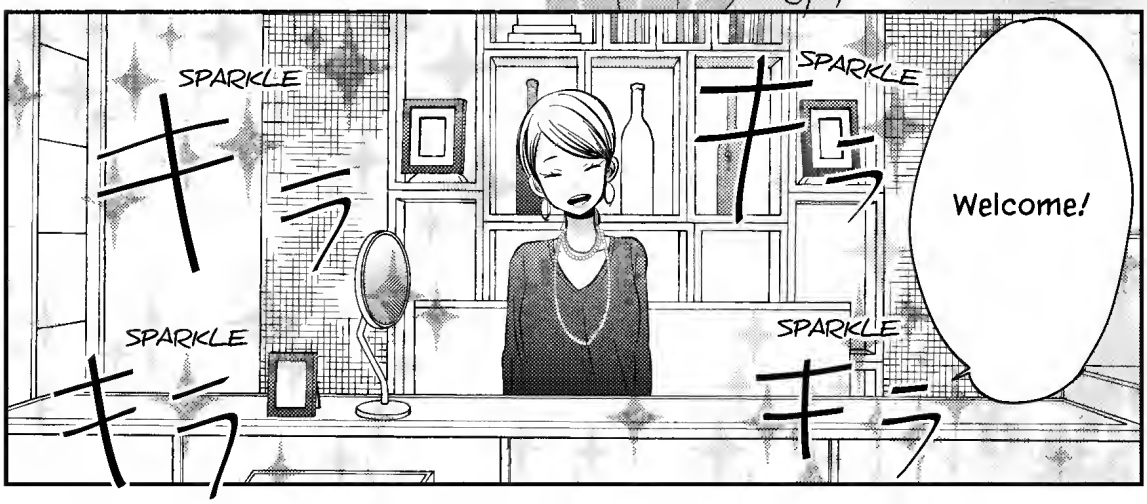
Ow!
PLASH

When your one-sided feelings end...
...whether it's gone well or whether you've given up...
...you just have to keep moving forward.
Yeah.
CLATTER
ガタッ!!
So you can't just stay depressed.
Since Daiki-kun is acting like everything's normal, you should be able to.
C'mon! Let's go buy some Christmas presents!
You wanted to buy colored pencils for your little sister, right?
Yeah.

KACHIK
The bunny one is cute.
I guess so.
I need to ask Daiki right away which of these colored pencil packages is the best one.

Hmm... Yeah, how about this one?

You're right.
I have to keep living as usual.
I want to be considerate of Daiki's feelings.

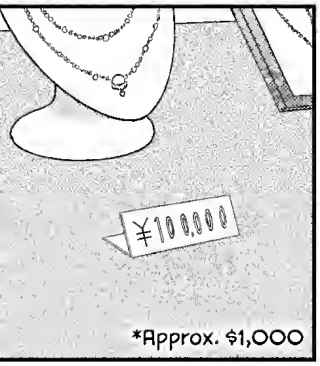

SPARKLE
キラ
SPARKLE
キラ
SPARKLE
キラ
SPARKLE
キラ
Welcome!

You don't wear accessories, Mao...
You'd understand if you got one from Hiro-san.
Are they that great?

I want to get something like this for a Christmas present!
♡
Waaaah! They're so cute!
♡♡

SMIRK
SMIRK
Just get him to buy you one!
Wh-what?
Oooooh.

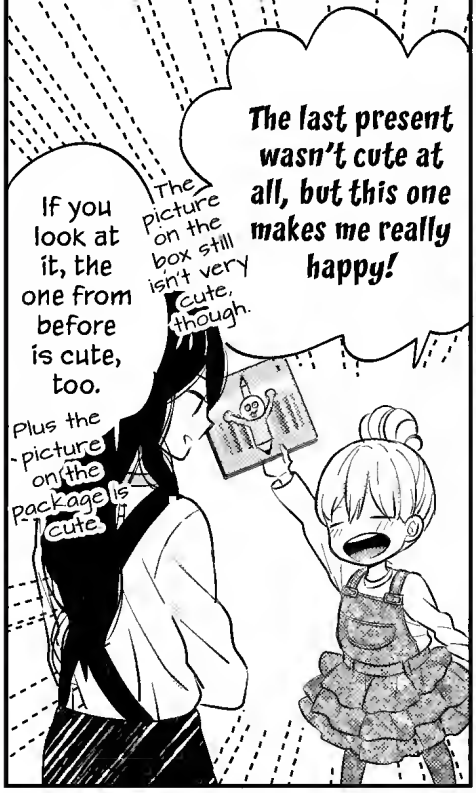
...I guess.
Or maybe I'd just be embarrassed.


¥100,000
*Approx. $1,000

GASP
はぁ…

I feel for him.
This is going to be tough for Oda-kun.

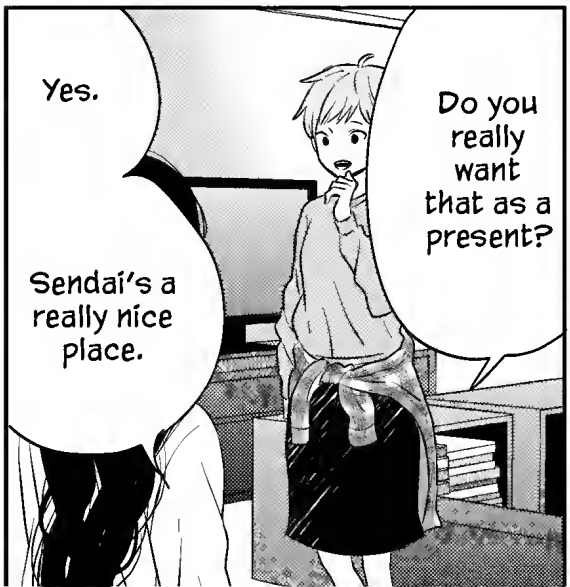
Rose gold is so cute!
DWA HEH HEH
Cuuute!


The last present wasn't cute at all, but this one makes me really happy!
The picture on the box still isn't very cute, though.
If you look at it, the one from before is cute, too.
Plus the picture on the package is cute.

Waah! Colored pencils!
Thank you, big sis!

If you've been a good girl, he might...
Wh...? Me, too?

Santa can bring me a doggy!
I don't know if he can do a dog.
Well, that's so nice. What do the two of you want Santa to bring you?


Yes.
Sendai's a really nice place.
Do you really want that as a present?

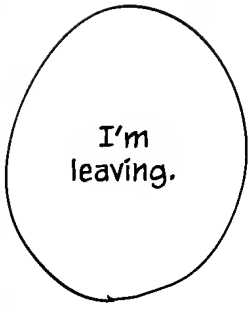
Well, I came to ask Santa if it might be okay to change the destination for our trip from Kyoto to Sendai.

SLAM

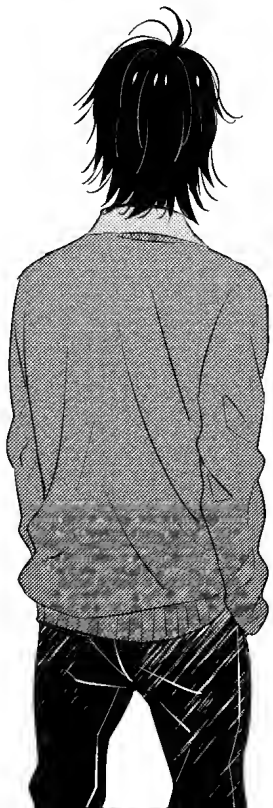
I wonder what Santa will say...?
That's an awfully small request.
Don't you want to ask for something a little bigger?

Ah.

It's all right.
He's just going to get the cake.

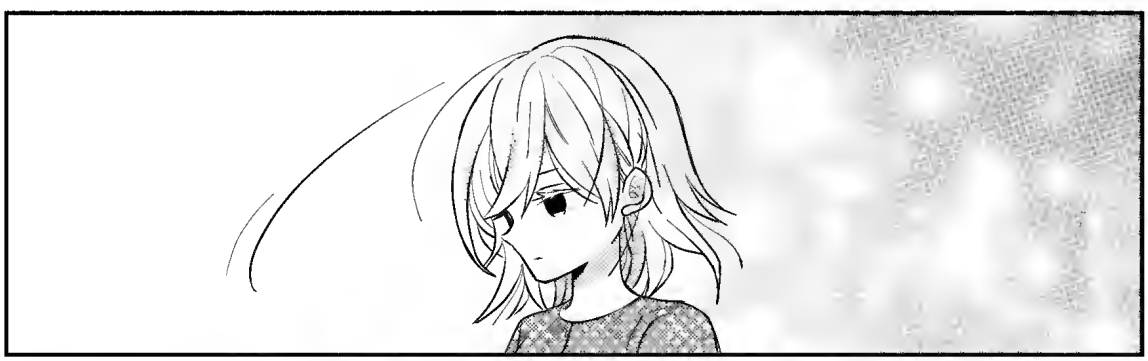

I'm leaving.

Do whatever you want.



He's getting one this big!
Big enough that even four people can't eat it all.
Even though you don't eat sweets, Mao-chan.
BZZ
BZZ
Hina...
...find anything good?
Nope.
Same for me, over here.
It's all gar-bage.

But would this all sell at a flea market?
We have that house play set and those shelves...
...and the rest is all small stuff, huh?



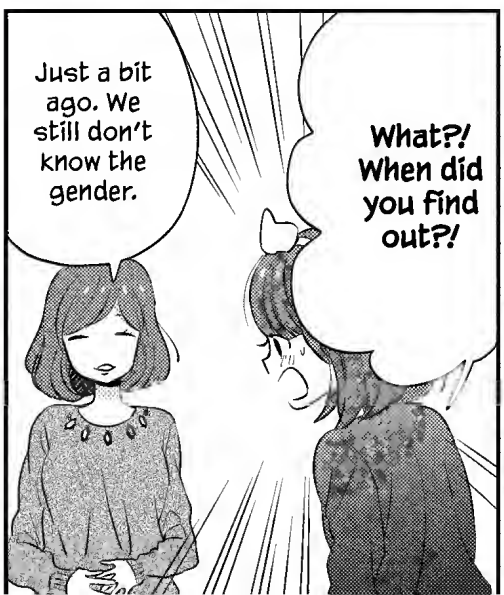
Please don't sell the house play set.
It might be old, but brand-name stuff is better, I guess.
It would probably sell for like a dollar?

Well, because we might use it?

Whaa? Why?

It's a total surprise, but I've somehow become pregnant!

I wanted to tell you all around dinnertime.
But now is fine.

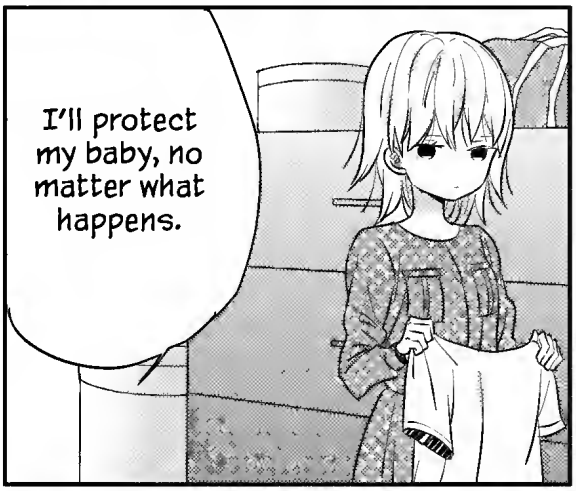

Just a bit ago. We still don't know the gender.
What?! When did you find out?!

Huhhh?!

I'm a little older, so it might be rough.
I'll work hard as a mom.

I'm not really lonely 'cause Hina's here...
Oh, man. That's really awesome.
FRANC

...but Hina might go home someday.
...


I'll protect my baby, no matter what happens.

What do you mean, protect?
You don't regret all these risks you're taking?

What happens if you die?

But...
...I'll put my life on the line for my baby.
Huh? Hina, what are you saying?
Quit saying weird things.
You're right... I want to watch my child grow up.
I want to see my grand-children.

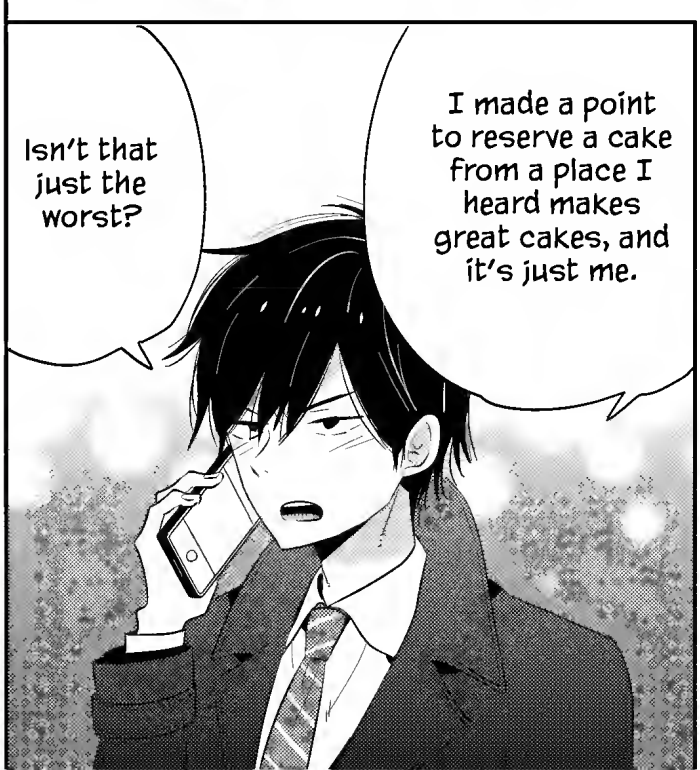
KACHK
Oh, well, we've already bought so many new ones.
But if it's a baby, we should buy new toys for it, shouldn't we?
Keep it.
Whoa, there's tons! We've got plenty. We don't even need that play set.
I had so much fun picking them out.
PILES
When I was a kid, I really wanted this play set, so I know if it's a girl, she'll really love it.
I also have something nice for you, Hina-chan.
Thank you.
Hmm... Then let's keep it, I guess.
FRANC

Here. It's from Hiro-kun.
He must have such a fun time picking out presents for you, Hina-chan.
He sends you one every year, after all.
...I—
Where's my present, Mom?
You'll have to wait, Kokoa.

I'm always stepping all over Hiro's feelings.
If you feel that way, just be sure to thank him.
Xmas

Hello?

It's Hina.

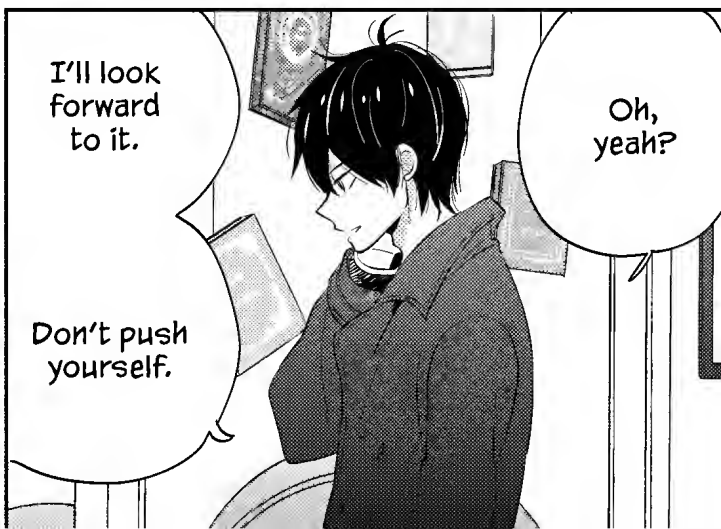

Isn't that just the worst?
I made a point to reserve a cake from a place I heard makes great cakes, and it's just me.

What are you doing?
Oh, hey.
What's up?
I'm on my way home from work, going to pick up our cake.

Thanks for the present, Hiro.
Cut it out!
A pretty sad Christmas Eve for a 24-year-old.
It's unusual ...
...to get a phone call from you.
Sure.
...
I got a text from Mao-chan earlier.
She said your vacation was going to be in Sendai and that I should show up at some point.
You don't have to get it.
That was a pretty half-assed pun. I'm not even sure what you were going for there.
My heart is getting heartier.

I'll go.

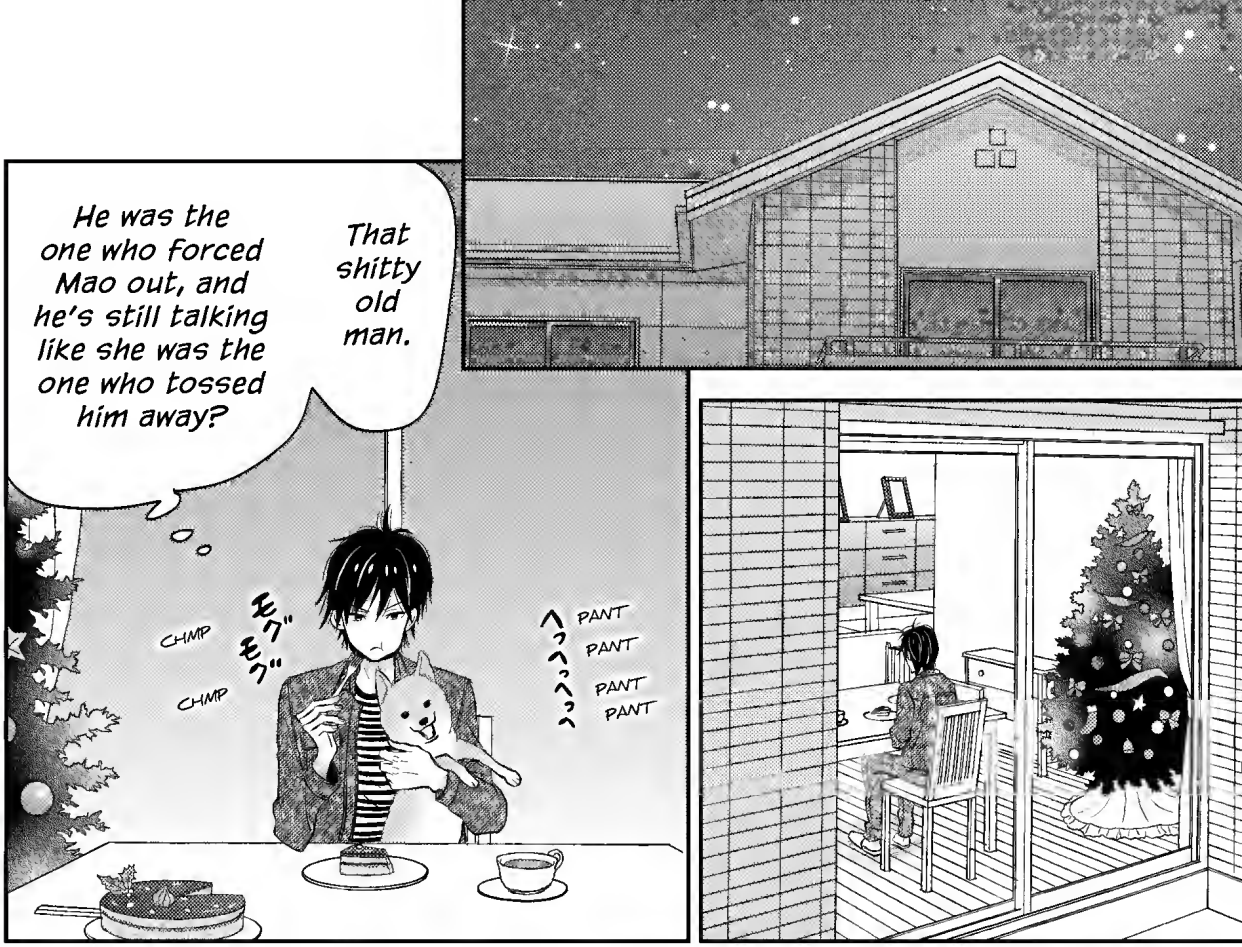
VWOOM
Hina called me...

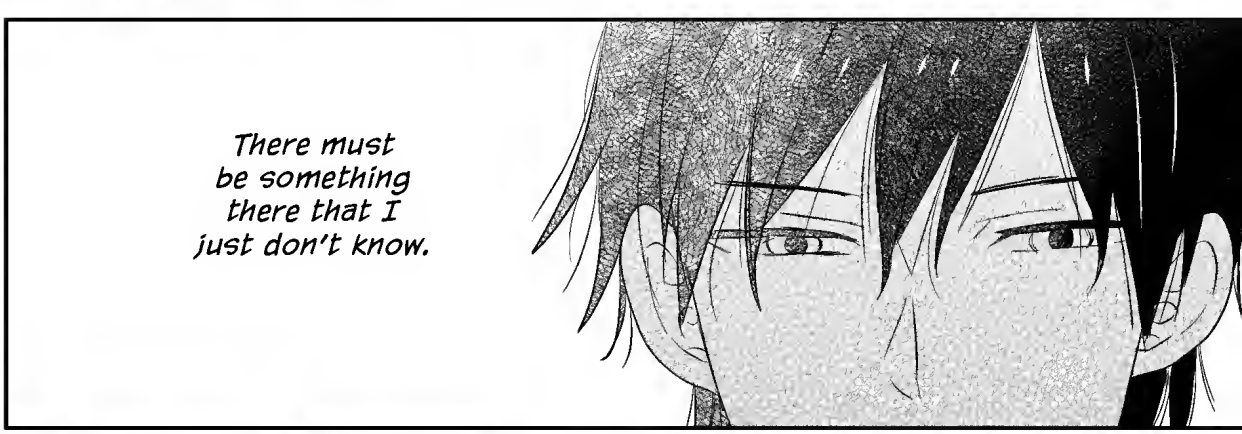

I'll look forward to it.
Don't push yourself.
Oh, yeah?

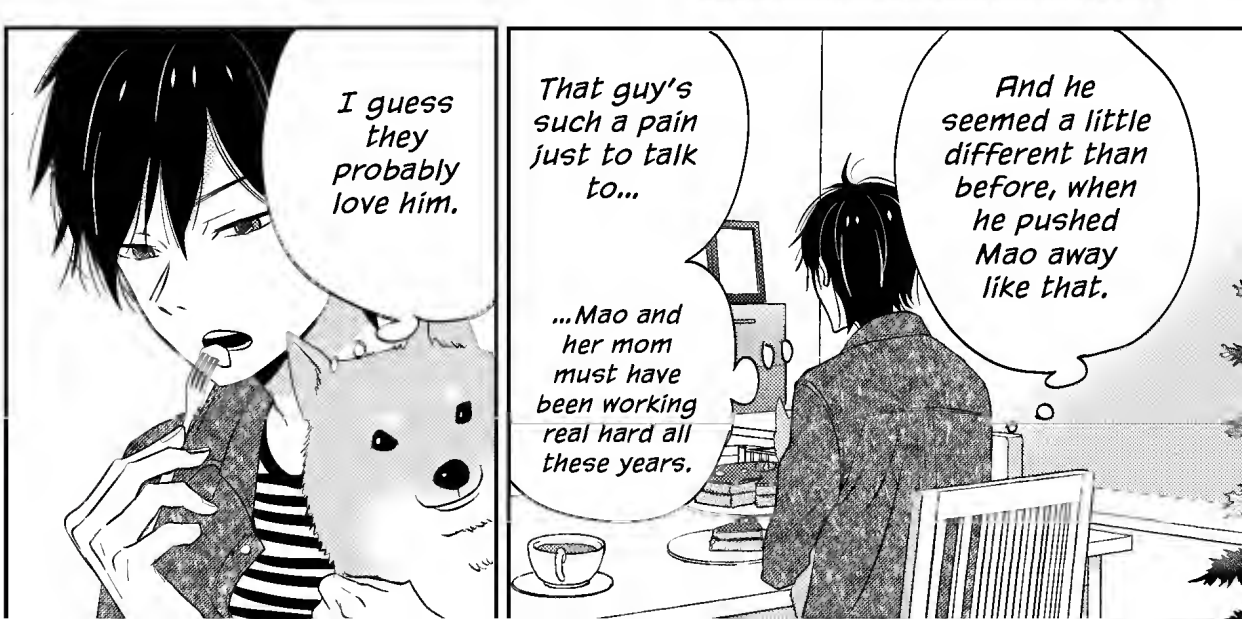
Just a little more...
Just a little more...
...and we'll all be together.
Oh, if it isn't Hiro-kun?

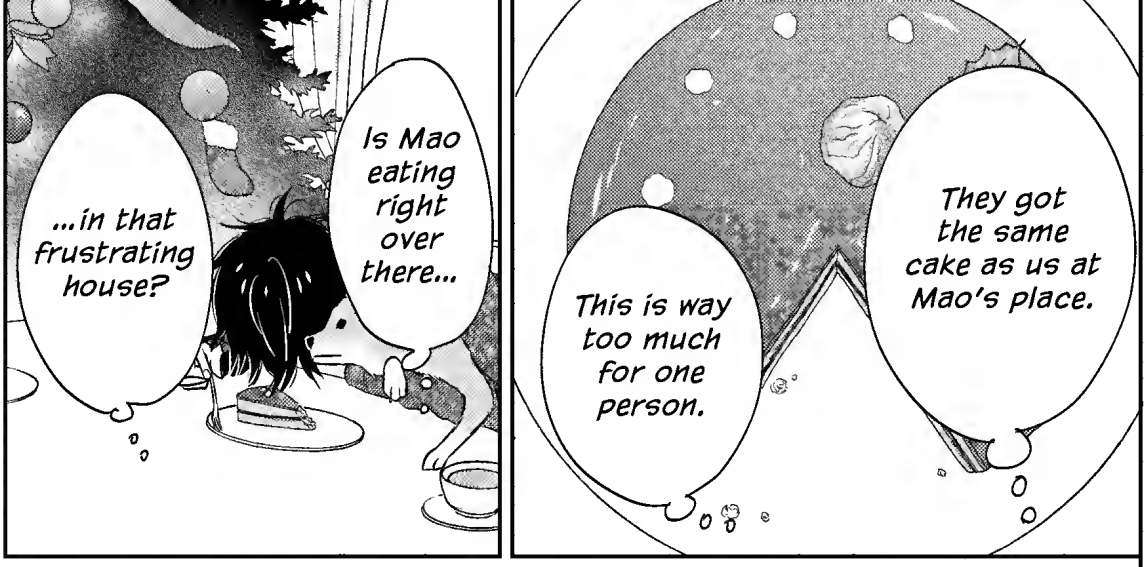
Thanks for putting up with Mao all this time.
Oh, hello.
Not at all.
Yo.
Huh?
Jeez... I can't believe Mao bothered comin' home again...
...and on Christmas, too.
Me, too.
Welcome!
I heard the cake's good here.
Ah, so you have a reservation?
She went home because she wanted to.
...

That's not how it was.
Mao has always...!
She always thinks of your place first.
Even now.
Even though she was the one who left in the first place.
Yes.
Thanks so much for everything.
Well, later.
I hear we're going to Sendai now?
I've never been there, so I'm looking forward to it.


He was the one who forced Mao out, and he's still talking like she was the one who tossed him away?
That shitty old man.
CHMP
モグモグ
CHMP
PANT
PANT
PANT
PANT


There must be something there that I just don't know.


I guess they probably love him.
That guy's such a pain just to talk to...
...Mao and her mom must have been working real hard all these years.
And he seemed a little different than before, when he pushed Mao away like that.


...in that frustrating house?
Is Mao eating right over there...
This is way too much for one person.
They got the same cake as us at Mao's place.

I'm lonely, Croquette.

BAM
I'm home!

When my step-mom found out you were all alone, she told me to go.
Wh-what's wrong, Mao?

Huh?

My dad even drove me over here!
She said I'll be able to have Christmas with them next year and the year after, too.

GUH.
See.
He's probably rushing back home.
But once I thought about it, I realized that Daiki'd be coming back as soon as work was over.
Ah, I see.
Well, I'll be going back out soon.
I thought Hiro would be all alone, so I came back.
FWIP
ぬぎっ
Why are you here, Mao?
Well, bye. I'll probably be back after midnight.
Karaoke with friends.
I do so go to karaoke.
Daiki, you don't do karaoke.
Where to?

Daiki!
Hina said she's going on the trip!

She did?
That's great.

She even went out of her way to call me up.
How many years has it been?
Yeah.
Hina-chan said that?!
I met up with your dad when I went to pick up the cake.
Huh?
Actually, that might be the first time she ever has.
I feel like both Hina and your dad are sort of coming over to our side a little bit.
Even I could eat the cake from that place.
Really?
He seemed pretty happy picking up that huge cake.
He seemed a little different than before, to me.
That's exactly it.
Don't tell me we got the same cake.

I was always running away.
I never even tried to understand Dad, let alone wanting to get him to understand me.
You really have to start out by knowing yourself inside and out first.
It's so hard to change people's hearts.
It was you, Hiro.
The first time I ever wanted someone to accept me...
...I might never have tried to go back home. I might never have talked to my dad again.
If I hadn't fallen in love with you, Hiro...

A lie.
Sure, okay.
Ah, this isn't me saying I love you, though!
That was a lie!
Hmmm.
I could work harder because you were here with me.
Mao...

A present?! I didn't get you one!
I don't mind.
You came home, after all.
TOSS
...what is this?
What? It's a present, obviously.
Pretend to be happier, okay?
Waaah! It's a necklace! Isn't something like this expensive?!
No, it's about the right price for something a high school girl would wear. Was I wrong?
No, you weren't wrong.
Actually ...
I'm happy.
Happier than I thought I'd be.

You want to put it on me?! Don't try anything crazy, or I'll punch you! This is the back of a high school girl's neck!
Shut up.
SHF
Wear it, please.
Okay, I'll treasure it.
Let me.
DNK
Fine, then, I will.
DISAPPOINTED
Jeez, pick one.
You're not gonna do anything?
GWAAAHHH
See, you're just so loud when you get embarrassed.

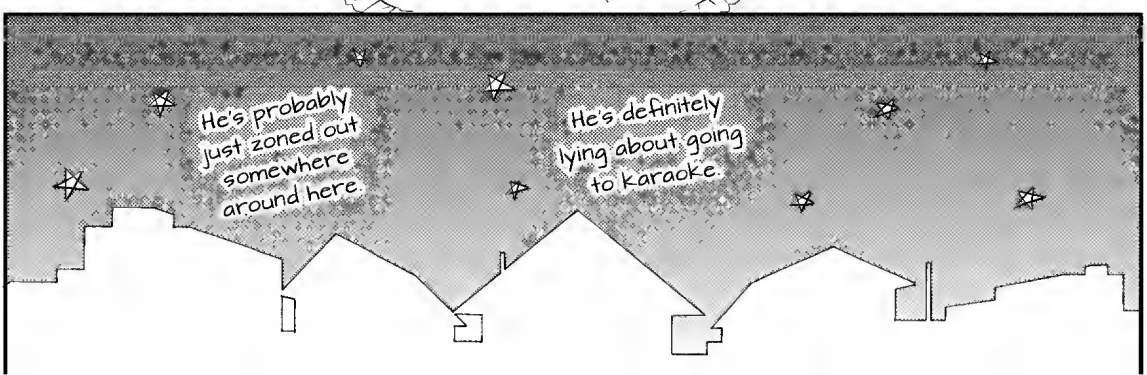
Yeah.

I feel like it's been a while since we really talked.

Well...
Let's go.

Yeah,
let's go.

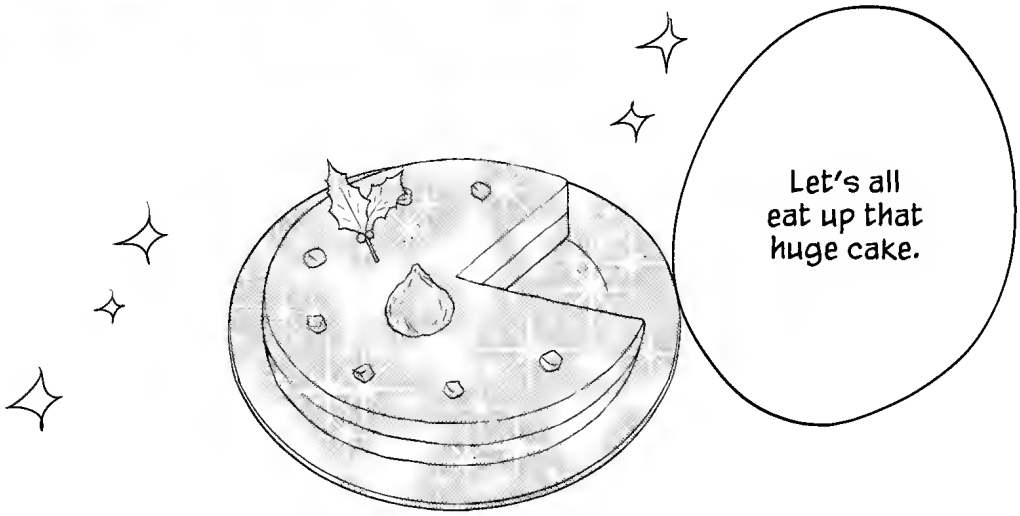
We've
gotta
pick up
Daiki.


He's probably
just zoned out
somewhere
around here.
He's definitely
lying about going
to karaoke.

There he is!
GAH.

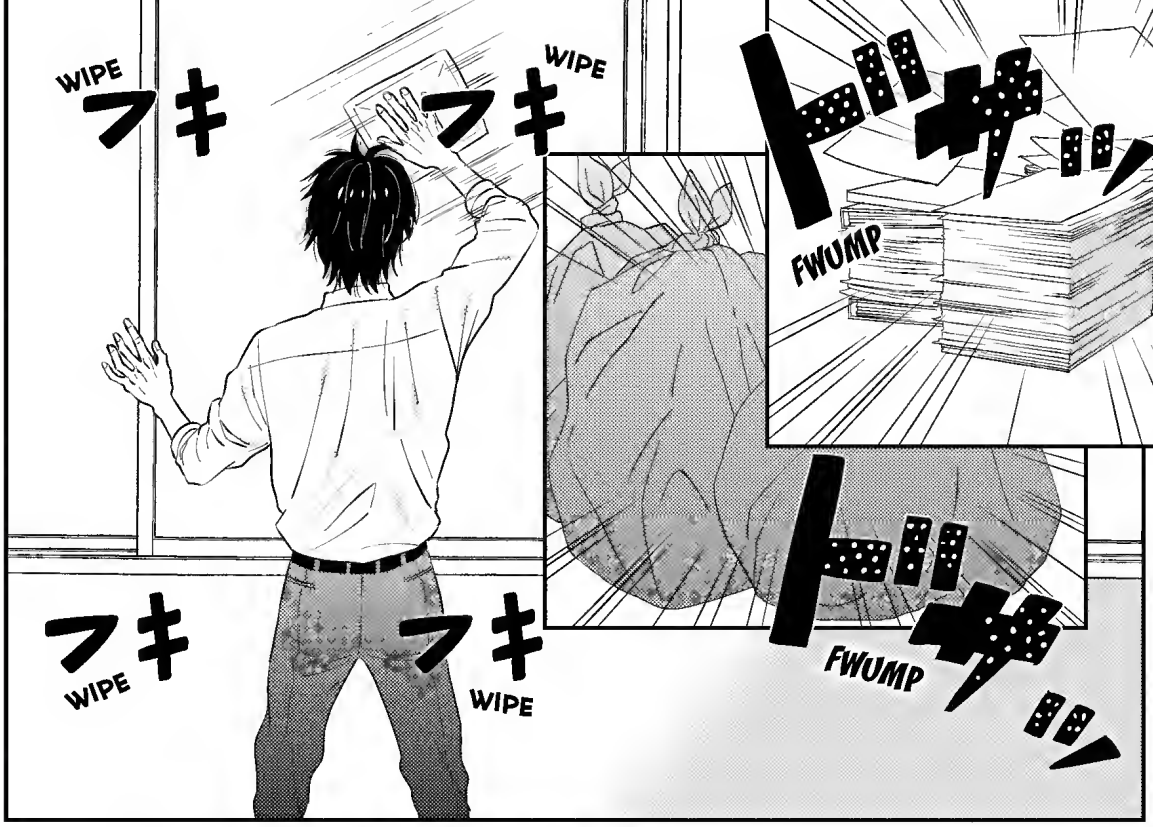
So, you want to go home with us?

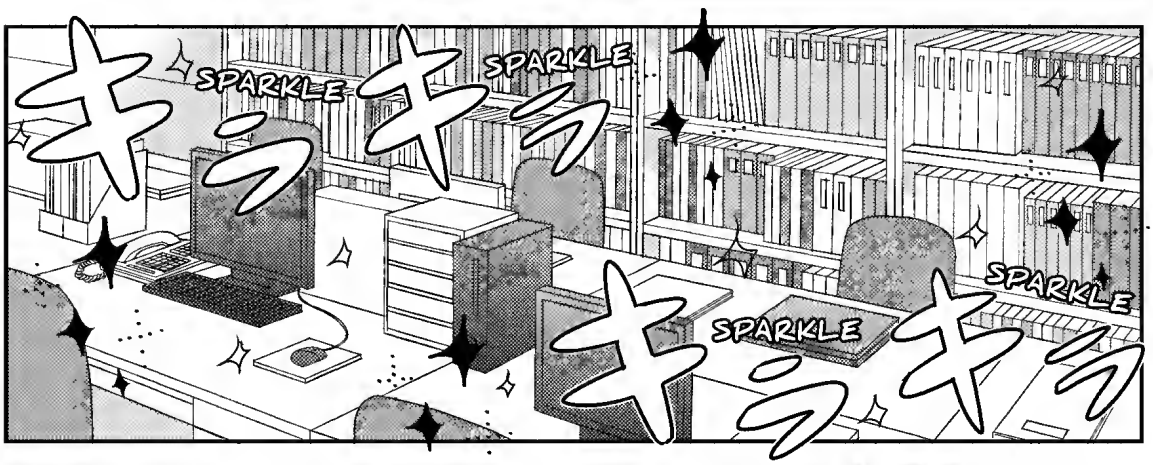
Karaoke ended really early, and everybody went home.


Let's all eat up that huge cake.

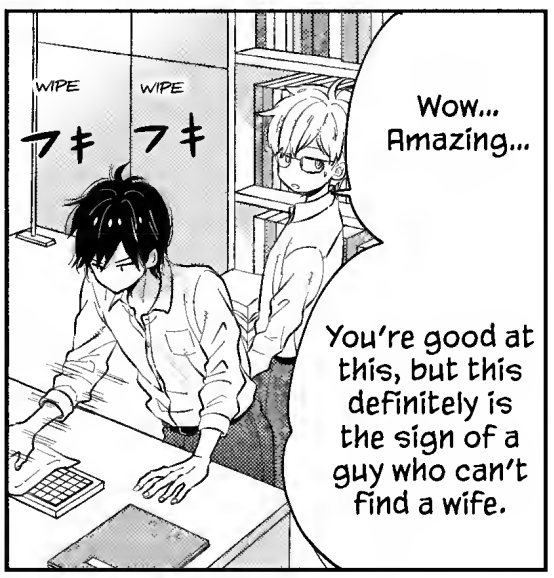
story 40

Countdown

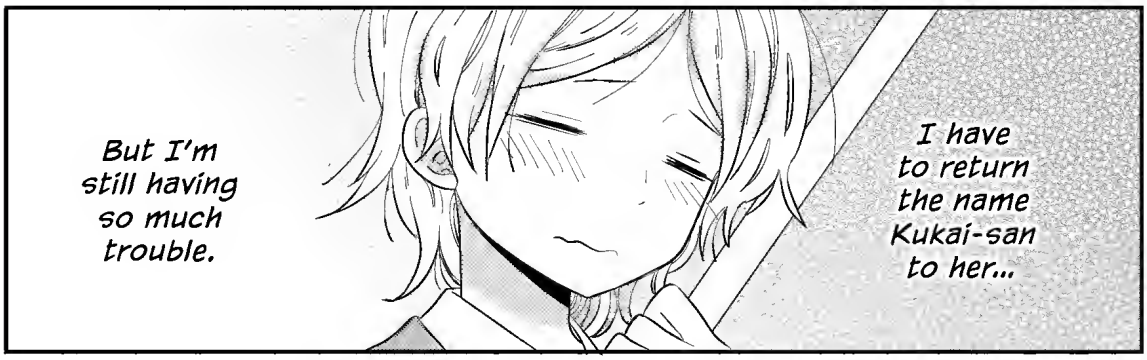

WIPE
フキ
WIPE
フキ
トリサ!!!
FWUMP
フキ
WIPE
フキ
WIPE
トリサ!!!
FWUMP


SPARKLE
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
SPARKLE
SPARKLE

SHING
キリ
It's all right. I can clean just fine on my own.
No, that's not the issue here.


WIPE
フキ
WIPE
フキ
Wow... Amazing...
You're good at this, but this definitely is the sign of a guy who can't find a wife.

Shut up! That's what Christmas is like nowadays.
Pretty normal.
Besides, what did you even do?
WIPE
WIPE
Oh, yeah, what'd you do for Christmas?
Spent it at home with the family.
That's just sexual harass-ment...
Hey, hey, Sugimoto-san, what'd you do for Christmas?
...and booted up Love Plus for the first time in a while!
TA-DUM
I stayed home...
What is Love Plus?
Aah.. A girl's party... I want to go...
I... was with friends ...
Huh? Wha? Me?!



...I even want to see Kukai-san just yet.

I'm not sure...

Honestly...

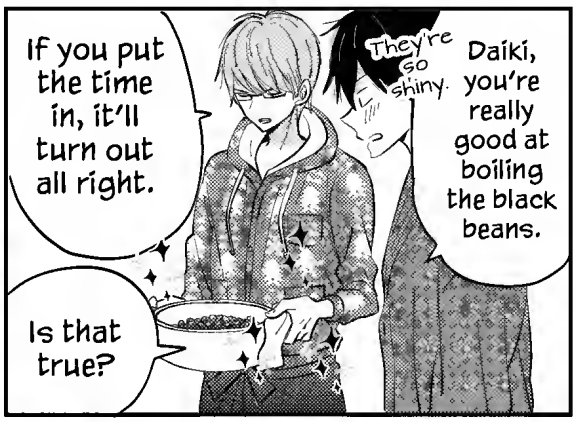
For some reason, it just won't end!
I could do it way better.
Hmph.
You suck!
I just figured that I'd take everything out and clean it up all in one go!
Why are you making such a mess in here?
What is with you two?! You're awful!
Okay, that makes me feel better.
Next year, Hina might come back, too, so we'd better be careful that it's done right.
Fine, you do it.
Hiro! Daiki's cleaning up the Japanese-style room!
PLUNK
てきぱき

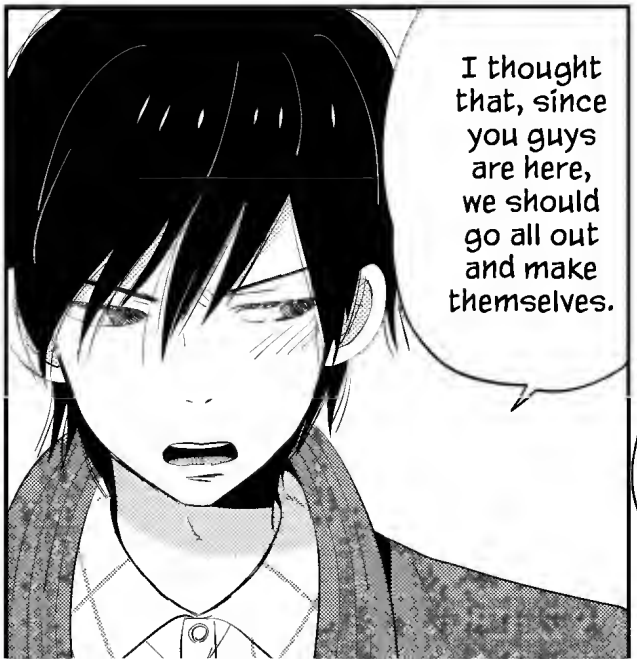
I'm gonna go clean my room!
I'll make it shine, just you wait!
Looking forward to it!
...have happened here.
So many things...
...not my things and not my emotions.
I can't leave anything here...
But this is Hina's room.

When did I get all this stuff?
Guh.
How am I gonna get it home?
PILED
It's like all the time I spent here is in one pile.

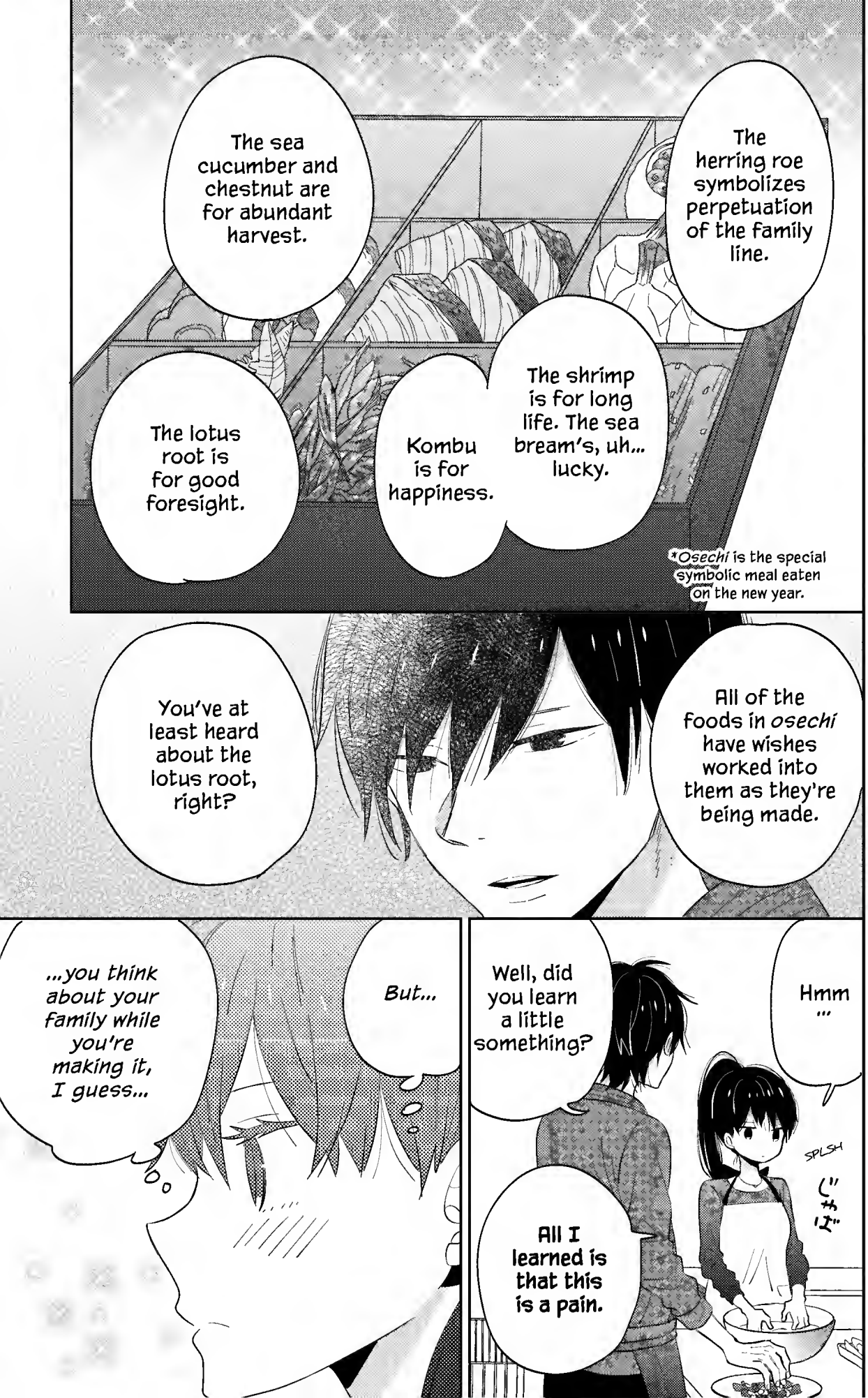
Hiro, what do I do with this?
Peel off the membrane and rinse the salt out, please.
SHK
SHK
SHK

Are black beans hard to make?
They are! Mine never turn out well.


Daiki, you're really good at boiling the black beans.
They're so shiny.
If you put the time in, it'll turn out all right.
Is that true?


I thought that, since you guys are here, we should go all out and make themselves.

Hmm. You make them a lot, even though they're tough.
CHMP
モグ
モグ
CHMP
I can't take out the black beans. They're in there to symbolize good health. Plus, they're delicious.
They symbolize how it's easier to buy 'em at the store!


The herring roe symbolizes perpetuation of the family line.
The sea cucumber and chestnut are for abundant harvest.
The shrimp is for long life. The sea bream's, uh... lucky.
Kombu is for happiness.
The lotus root is for good foresight.
*Osechi is the special symbolic meal eaten on the new year.
All of the foods in osechi have wishes worked into them as they're being made.
You've at least heard about the lotus root, right?
Hmm...
SPLSH
じゃぁ
Well, did you learn a little something?
All I learned is that this is a pain.
But...
...you think about your family while you're making it, I guess...

Seeing all of the foods sparkling like this...

...is really strange to me.

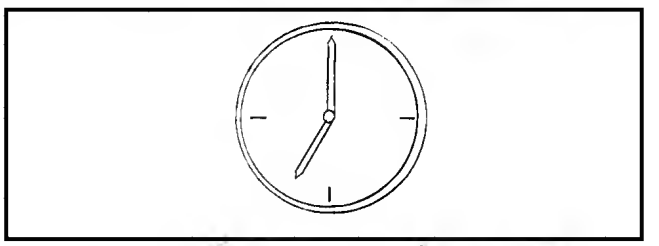
I thought osechi was something that you bought at a grocery store.

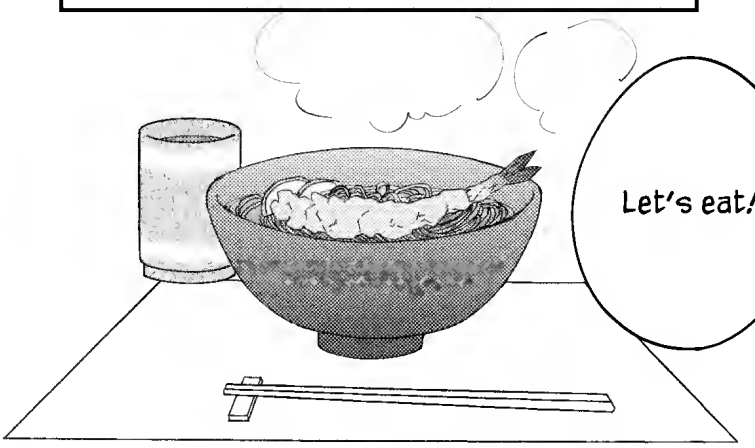
It was all brown ...

...and it didn't taste very good.

I never really liked it very much.

I hope I can make it next year, too. With my stepmom this time.





Let's eat!

It's new year's soba!
Shut up!
New year's soba symbolizes health and longevity and it—
*Soba is a type of buckwheat noodle.
What time did we say we were going to visit the shrine? We're supposed to meet up with Mao's family.
SLURRP
ズズ
HUFF
はふ
はふ
HUFF
HUFF
はふ
HUFF
はふ
Was it 11:00? Mao is supposed to go at 10:00 to get dressed, right?
Yeah.
SLURRP
ズルー
Not Mao?!
I just don't get you!
SLURP
ズル
You're like a child.
Just shut up and eat, Hiro.
Because my stepmom said she'd help me put it on.
Yeah.
It's different than at work.
HUFF
はふ
Hm? Mao, you're gonna wear a kimono?
Even though you wear them all the time at work?

Hmm...
...
ちゅる
SHLRP
It's really like New Year's Eve.
This is nice.
It's the most fun time for it.
Chi-chan's gonna wear one, too.
She's all fired up to go alone with Oda-kun.
Yep, New Year's Eve.
It is New Year's Eve.
It is!

...there were in a single year.
...how many family events...
I never realized...
Okay! Mao-chan, hold this.
And pull!
TUUUG

Mom...
I...
If you don't tighten it up like that, it'll just fall apart!
TUG
Yeah...!
...had a friend's mom dress me in a *yukata* over the summer.
And I was thinking, man, moms are nice.
And now even I have someone who will be my mom.
Yeah.

That's right, you do.
Thank you.
Hey!
Sorry for the wait.
OOOOH
H
H
You look good in a kimono.
It's cute.

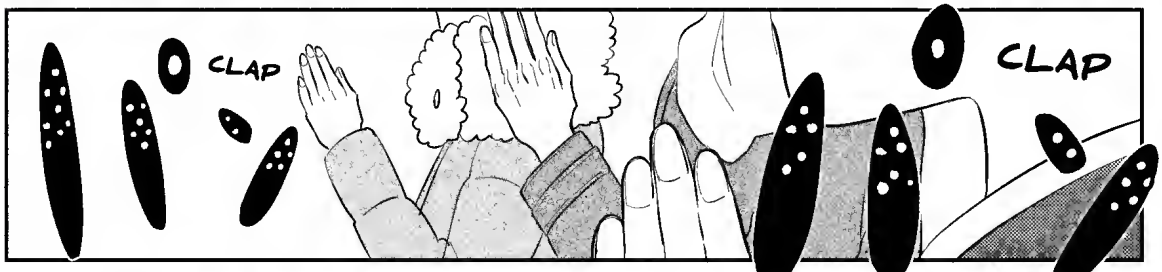
It's cute.
What's with you two?!
I'm gonna go crazy, so cut it out!
C-cu-?!
BLUUSH
かぁーっ

Let's go to the shrine!

Welcome, Hiro-kun, Daiki-kun.
Sorry for the wait!
Sorry for the wait.

Oooh, you're a cutie, too!
Thanks!
Hina was like this, too.

MURMUR
ナンバ
MURMUR
ナンバ

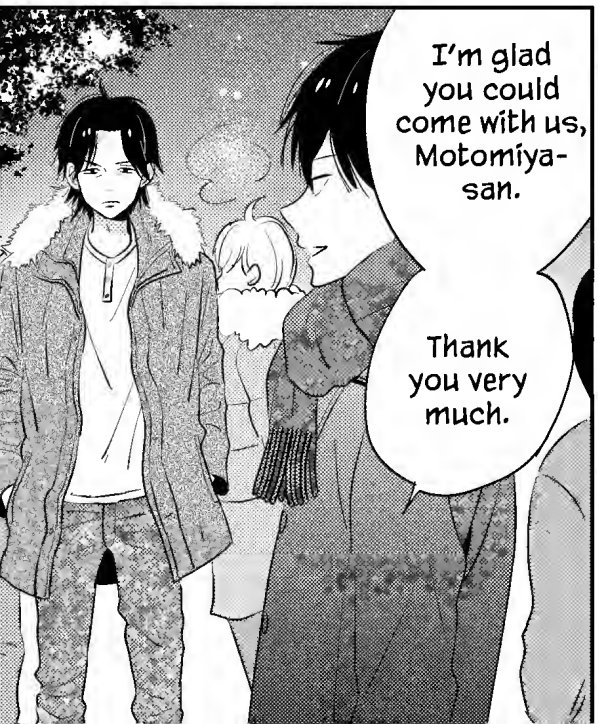

CLAP
パン
CLAP
パン

Whenever I go to a shrine, I always pray for the same things...
GLANCE
チラ

I pray that my family all gets along.
I pray that Hina comes home soon.

I wonder...
...what Hiro's praying for.

コーン
DONNNG
It's the New Year's Eve bell.


I'm glad you could come with us, Motomiya-san.
Thank you very much.

コーン
DONNNG
This year is finally about to end.

DONNG
ゴーン
The more the merrier!
It's nothing.
True.
Hey, hey! It's like we're playing red rover!
Yep.
We're gonna take the doggy on the trip, right?
DONNG
ゴーン
I wanna play red rover, it's no fun to lose! ♪
I wanna play red rover, and I wanna win! ♪

Red rover, red rover! ♪
Send big sis right over! ♪
Oh, wow.
That's who I want!

She was taken away.
That's where she should be from now on.
HUFF
はー
If I actually think about it, it'd be weird if she came back to our place from here.
I kind of understand how her shitty dad feels right now.
He just can't be honest, can he?
He's got an irritating personality.

あけまして
おめでと!
HAPPY NEW YEAR!
YAAAAY

Yeah, let's.

Let's have a good one!
Happy New Year!

She sent me one, too.
Me, too!
It's from Hina!
She says Happy New Year!

BZZZZ
Oh.

I got one from Chi-chan, too!
FWIP
I've been thinking this for a bit, but you're really creepy, Hiro.
SHIIINE
Oooh...
For some reason I want to punch Oda-kun.
Proba-bly!
Proba-bly!
I have not! I just love Chi-chan too much, that's all!
You've been pretty harsh to Oda-kun, lately.
Big sis was taken away again...

C'mon, let's all go home together!
Ugh... Kimonos are tiring.

I wanted my step-mom to put it on me, that's why!
Then why'd you wear it?
I know I say it every single day, but...
...I have to thank you again.
Stuff like this?
My real mom never did stuff like this for me.
Osechi and stuff.
...I got to end the year and start it like this.
I'm so happy...

I've thought before that you are kind of like a mother, Hiro...
But now I'm sure.
I think Daiki and Hina-chan feel the same way, don't they?
I'm not that old...
That's not what I mean!
You're warm.
You make me feel safe.

...
But I just recently realized...
...you don't have anyone like that for yourself.
What a poor baby.
Don't say that so flatly.
It really is sad.
Well, I guess I have no choice! I'll have to become someone like that for you, Hiro!
TA-DUUUM
You'll work yourself too hard without someone to mother you!

Of course, I can't actually be your mom. No way!
But I'll comfort you when you need it!
Because you're so pathetic.
...
Wh-what's wrong, Hiro?
Did I bum you out by calling you pathetic?

It's nothing.
Go to bed.
FWSH
わしわし
Thank you so much for everything over the past year, Hiro, really.
FWSH
I just hope I can pay you back for it, even a little bit, this year.
SQUEEZE
わし

Look, I...
...was glad to have you here, too.
Don't throttle me, idiot!
TUG
Oww!
This last year was the best ever, too.
But I'm usually all alone.
Everyone celebrates the new year with their families.

And today is the start of a new best year ever.

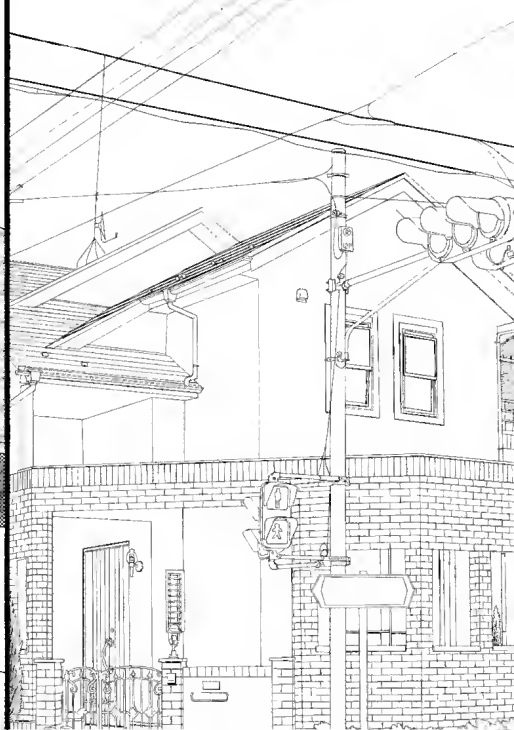
That night,
I had a dream.

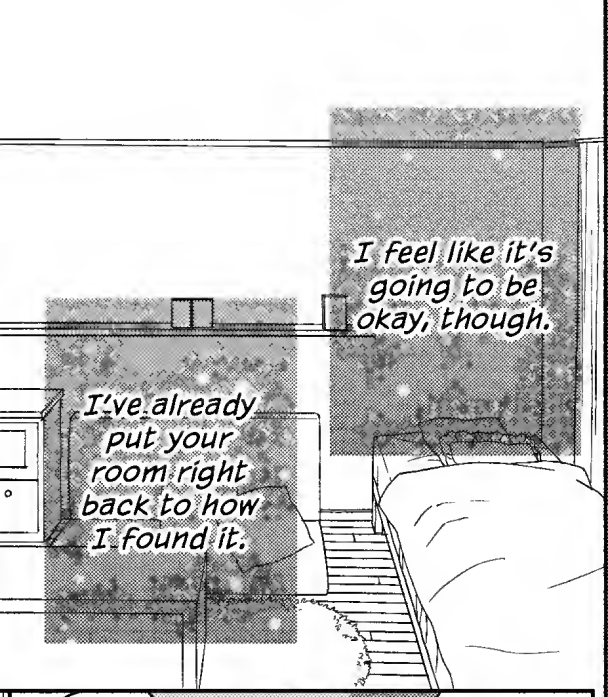
My two moms and my dad were by my side.
Hiro and Daiki and Hina-chan...
...didn't have even one mom.
I was really, really sad.
Hiro's spoiled me so much, too.
Or a dad, either.
Finally, I swore that I had to live as the best mom I could!
It was a weird first dream of the year.

I'm so happy we'll be able to go together!
I'm looking forward to our Sendai trip.

Hina-chan, Happy New Year.

...but I hope you can get along.
My dad's kind of a weird guy...





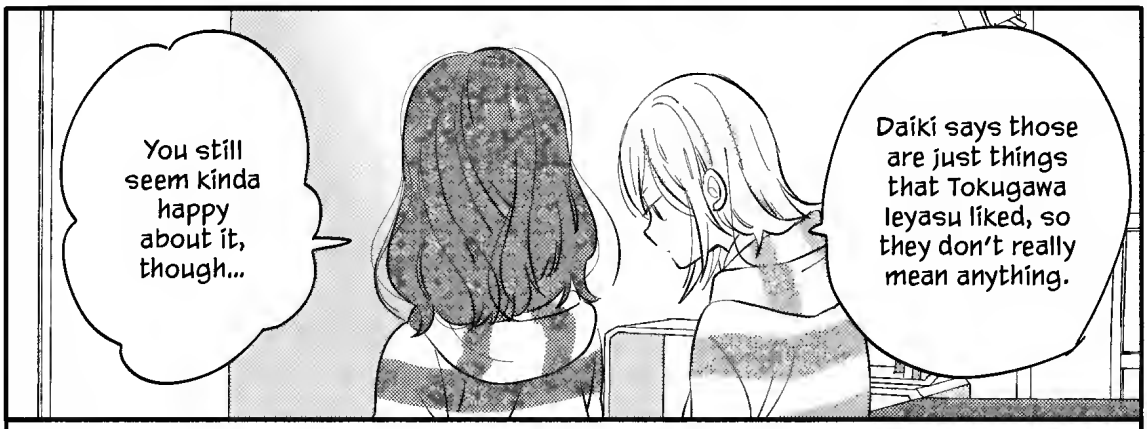
When we're back from the trip, I'll be going back to my house.

Of course, that's as long as my dad says it's okay.

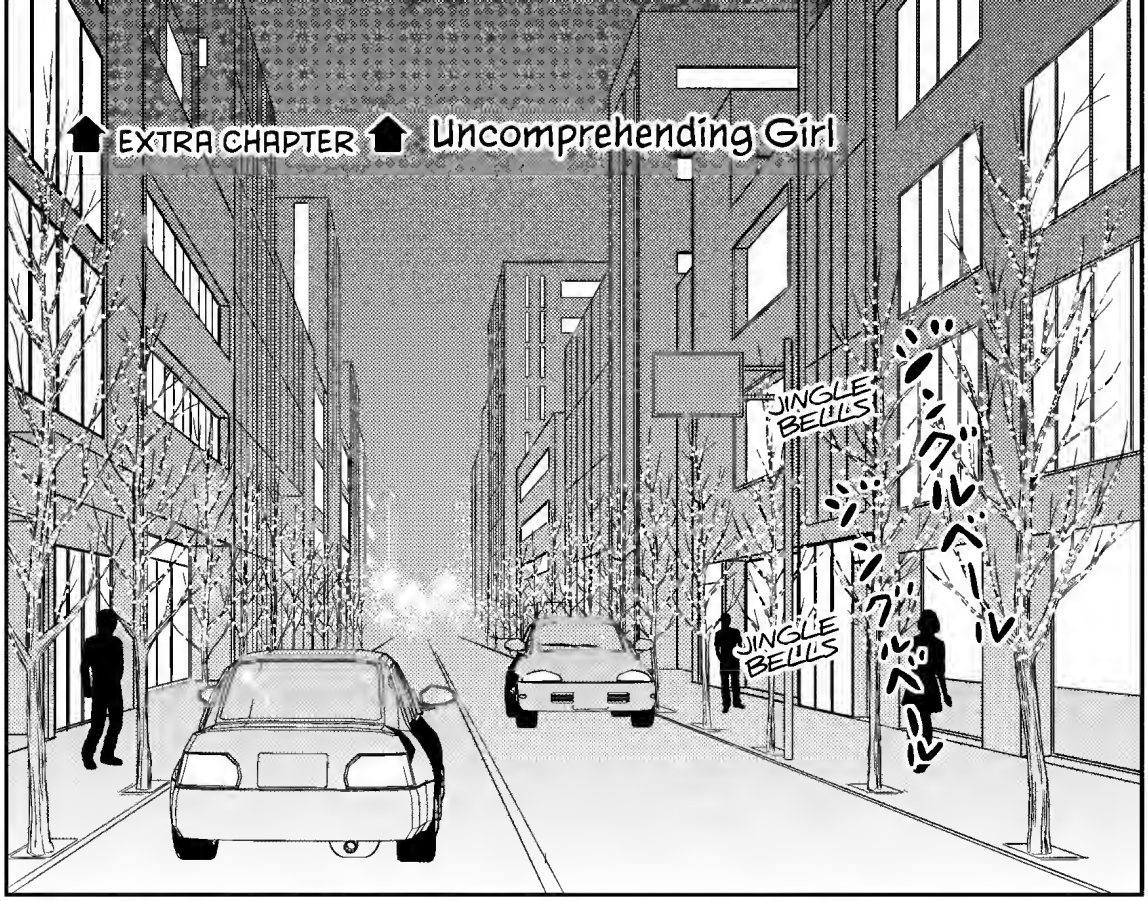
Eggplants?! That's a good dream to have!
They say number one is Mount Fuji, number two is a hawk, and number three is eggplants, right?
Note: The first dream of a new year is said to be prophetic. The three listed themes are considered especially lucky.

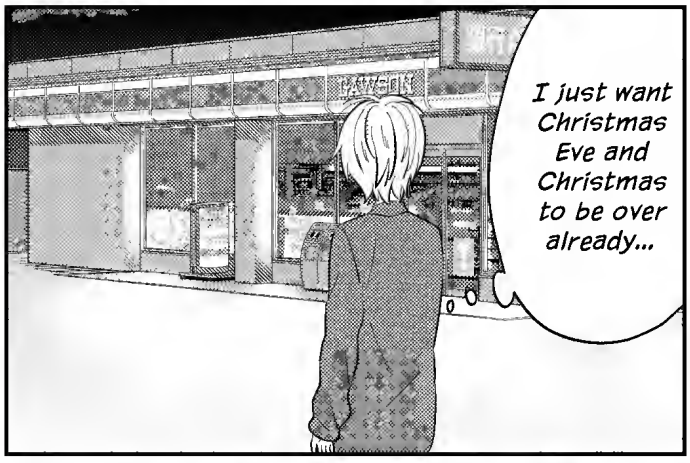
Did you have a first dream of the year? I didn't.

I dreamed I was eating a mountain of eggplants.


You still seem kinda happy about it, though...
Daiki says those are just things that Tokugawa Ieyasu liked, so they don't really mean anything.

I'm kinda happy.
Yeah.
To be continued...

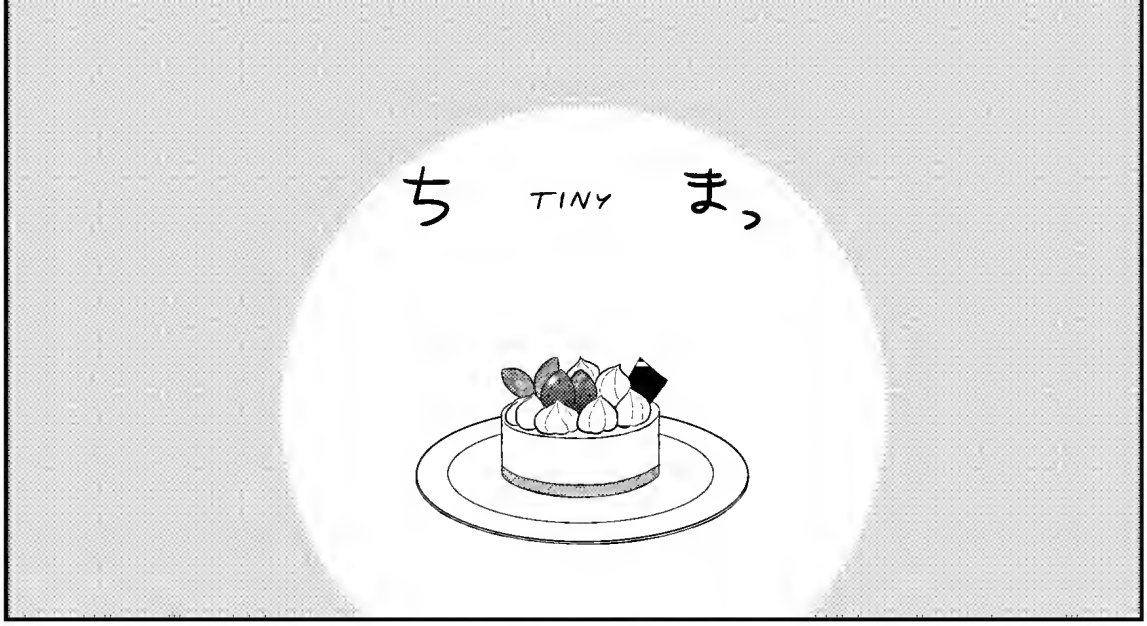

EXTRA CHAPTER
Uncomprehending Girl
JINGLE BELLS
JINGLE BELLS

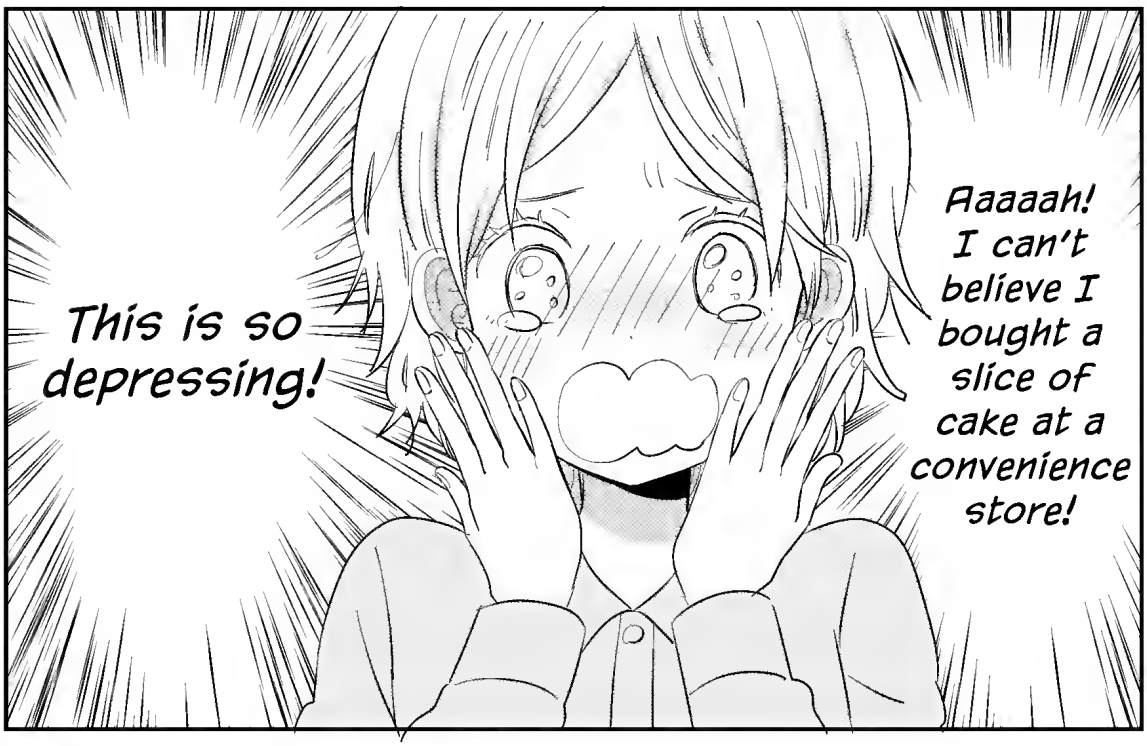

I just want Christmas Eve and Christmas to be over already...

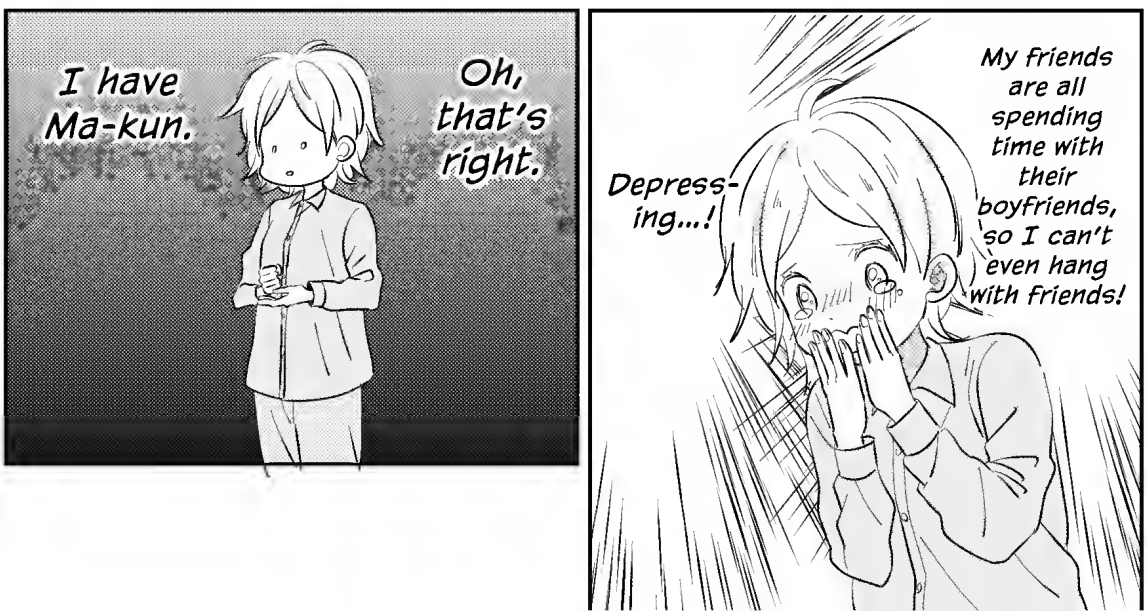
But everyone's a normie.
It's a Christmas world...

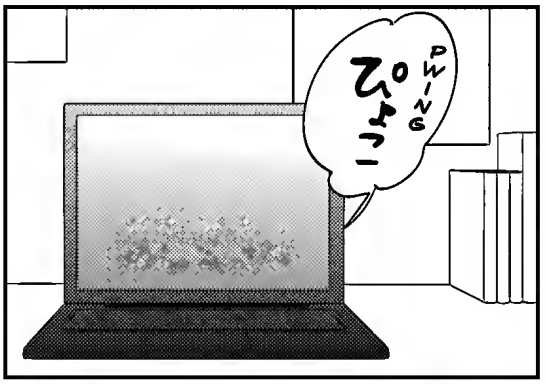
...

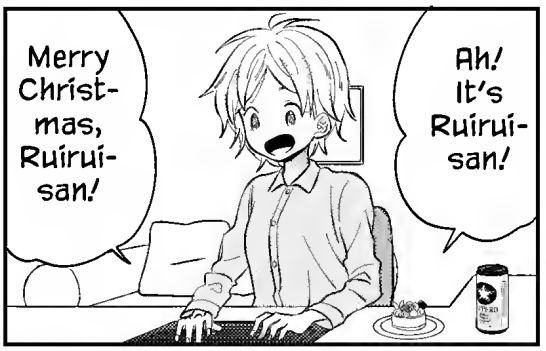
Ughhh... I don't want to think about it.
I bet Nakamura-san and Kukai-san are spending it all alone together.

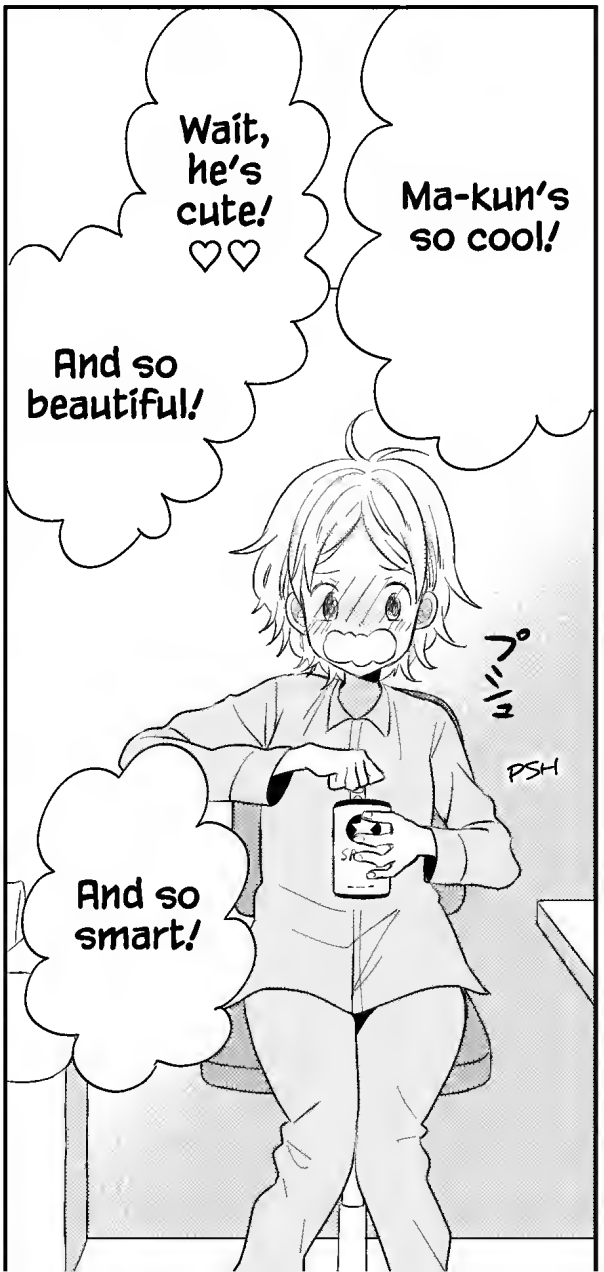

ち TINY まっ


Aaaaah! I can't believe I bought a slice of cake at a convenience store!
This is so depressing!


My friends are all spending time with their boyfriends, so I can't even hang with friends!
Depress-ing...!
Oh, that's right.
I have Ma-kun.







SUGIMOTO

Ma-kun is so cuuuuute!
Merry Christmas!

RUIRUI

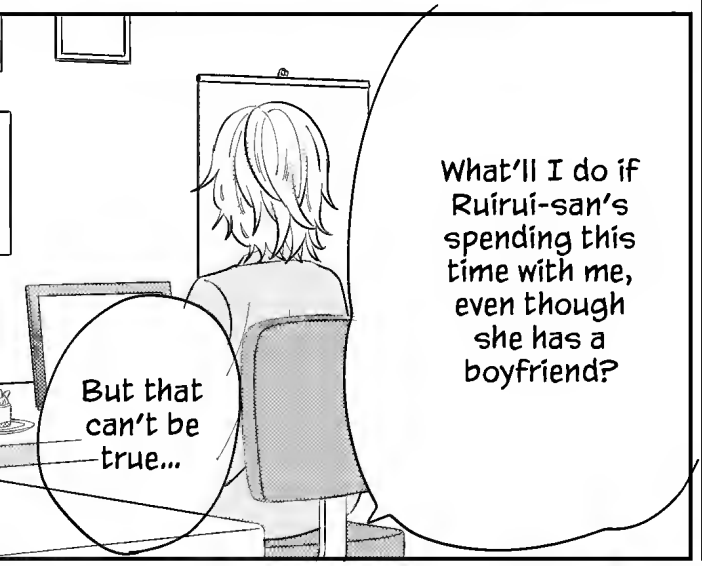
Ma-kun is so cool.
He's the beeeest!

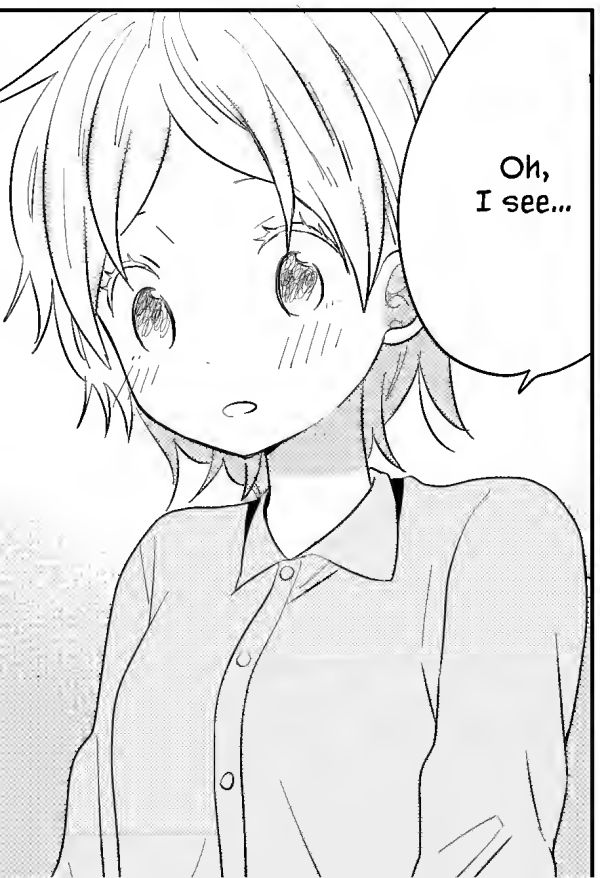
SUGIMOTO

What're we doing here on Christmas, lol...

RUIRUI

I actually wanted to talk to you, anyway. So I'm good. lol. I'm actually really glad you signed on.





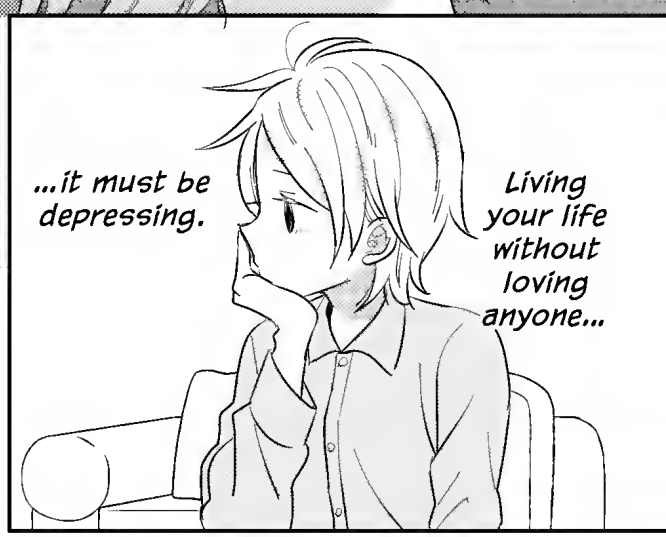
SUGIMOTO

Do you have a boyfriend, Ruirui-san?

RUIRUI

I don't... lmao

As if I'd ever... lmfao

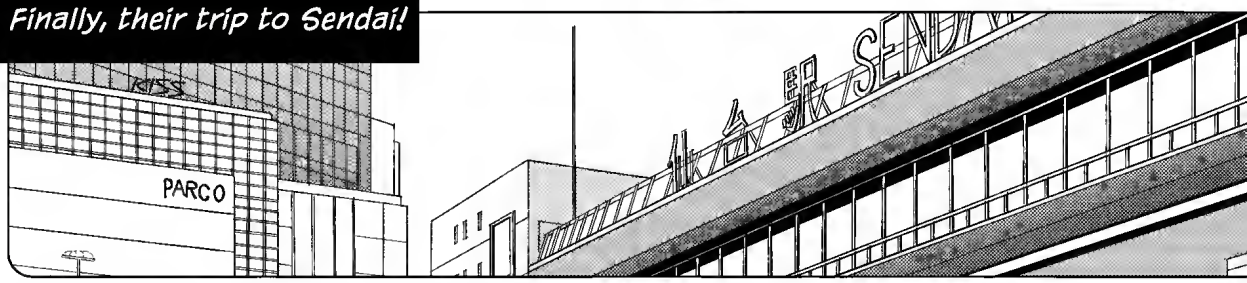


RUIRUI

Let's drink 'til dawn! Let's make this the best Christmas ever!

End of extra chapter

Finally, their trip to Sendai!



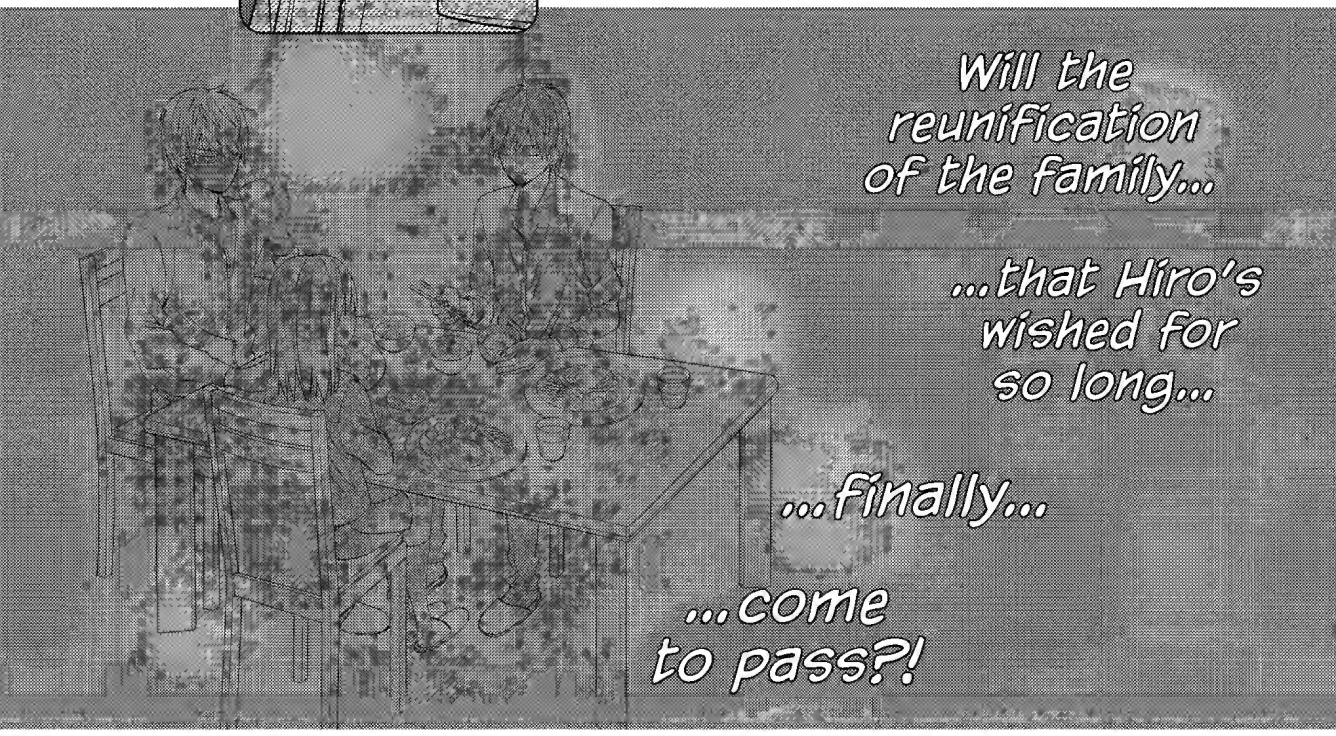
The Motomiya family and Nakamura family come together for a family trip...

...start to change?

Will Mao's father...

...finally open?

Will Hina's heart...



Will the reunification of the family...

...that Hiro's wished for so long...

...finally...

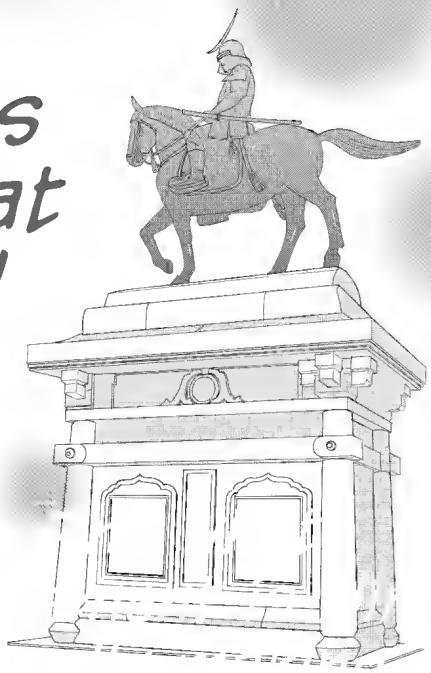
...come to pass?!

And with Mao's return to the Motomiya house...

...what will become of their love?

Now...

...begins the great battle!



HOUSE of the SUN 11

Popular right now!

House of the Sun 10

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